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TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

50TH ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATE AN AMERICAN CLASSIC

HARPER LEE

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HARPERPERENNIAL MODERNCLASSICS

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Setting: Maycomb, Alabama, 1930's **Narrator:** Jean Louise "Scout" Finch

Chapter 1

When my brother Jem was almost 13 he broke his arm, badly. Even though it healed, we always talked about what really caused the accident. I said the Ewells, but he said Dill and Boo Radley started it. But then he said if our ancestors, the Finches had never moved to Alabama, then none of this would have happened, and the rest is history.

We're southerners. We think it's a big deal who your family is, where you've come from, and what you're known for. Our ancestor, Simon Finch, was a stingy and religious man. He saved up all his money to buy up Finch's Landing, and for generations that's where our family has lived. My Aunt Alexandra still lives here now with her quiet husband. My father Atticus Finch, went to Montgomery, Alabama to study law, and his brother Jack went to Boston to study to be a doctor. My father moved back to Maycomb once he finished law school.

Maycomb was a tired, old town back in those days. People moved slowly, ambling across the town square. Days seemed long, especially on hot summer days. People didn't hurry, because there was nowhere to go, nothing to buy, no money to buy it with, and nothing to see.

We lived on the main street, Atticus, Jem, and I. Our father played with us, read to us, and treated us fine. We had a cook too, Calpurnia. She was strict with me. She always asked me why I didn't behave as well as Jem. But he was older anyhow. She always won our battles; my father always took her side. Our mother died of a heart attack when I was two so I didn't remember her. Jem seemed to miss her though.

One day during the summer when I was six and Jem was nine, we were playing in our neighborhood as usual. We heard something in Miss Rachel's garden. We found a boy sitting looking at us.

He said, "I'm Charles Baker Harris. I can read."

"So what?" I said.

Jem wanted to get a better look at him so he said, "Why don't you come over, Charles Baker Harris."

"Folks call me Dill, " he said, struggling to fit under the fence. Dill told us he was from Mississippi, but was spending the summer with his aunt Rachel. He had seen a bunch of movies,

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so he described them to us, and we spent the next days acting them out. He was very creative, and always had good ideas. We eventually got tired of recreating Dracula and other stories. That's when Dill's fascination with the Radley house began.

The Radley house had sagging shingles, and a drooping porch. The grass was too high and the paint had turned gray and dingy. Even in the long, hot summer, the doors were shut up tight. There was a rumor that it was haunted. People said "Boo" Radley went out at night and peeped in people's windows. That he breathed on flowers and they froze instantly. They said he committed little crimes in the night but not one ever saw him.

The history of the story is that Arthur, "Boo", got into a bad crowd in high school. They swore, fought, and got into real trouble when they locked a court officer in the outhouse (bathroom). Boo's father was so strict that the judge let him take Boo home, and no one had seen him since. Years later, the story goes, Boo was making a scrapbook out of articles from the Maycomb Tribune when he stabbed his father with a pair of scissors, and kept right on cutting.

Mr. Radley was not a nice man. He went to town each day but never spoke to us even if we said "Good Morning, Sir."

When he died, Calpurnia said, "There goes the meanest man God ever blew breath into." The neighborhood thought maybe Boo would come out, but his older brother Nathan moved in and he was just as mean. Atticus didn't like us to talk about the Radleys much, but the more we told Dill about the Radleys, the more he wanted to know. He would stand there hugging the light pole.

"Wonder what he does in there," he would murmur. "Wonder what he looks like?"

Jem said Boo was six and a half feet tall, ate squirrels and cats, his teeth were yellow, and he drooled most of the time.

"Let's try to make him come out," said Dill. Dill bet Jem to go up and knock on the door. Jem thought about it for three days.

"You're scared," Dill said.

"Ain't scared, just trying to be respectful," Jem said.

Three days later, after Dill had taunted him and called him scared repeatedly, Jem finally gave in. He walked slowly to the Radley yard, threw open the gate, sped to the house, slapped it with his hand, and sprinted back to us. When we were safe on our porch, we looked back at the old, droopy house. We thought we saw a slight movement inside.

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Chapter 2

I was really looking forward to starting school. I was going into the first grade. Finally! Atticus made Jem take me to school on the first day. I think Atticus even gave him some money as a bribe to let me tag along because I heard a jingle in Jem's pockets on the way. Jem told me that during school I wasn't supposed to bother him. We couldn't play together because it would embarrass him since he was in fifth grade.

My teacher's name was Miss Caroline Fisher. She was twenty-one years old and very pretty. She had bright auburn hair, pink cheeks, and wore crimson fingernail polish. Miss Caroline was from Winston County, which is in northern Alabama. She read us a story about cats on the first day. The cats had long conversations with one another, they wore cunning little clothes and lived in a warm house beneath a kitchen stove. By the time Mrs. Cat called the drugstore for an order of chocolate malted mice the class was wriggling in their seats. They thought this story was too immature for them. My classmates and I were very mature in a way because, even though they are young, they have had to chop cotton and feed hogs since they were very little.

Miss Caroline Fisher found out that I could already read, and this upset her. She wanted to teach me to read herself, I guess, and I think it disappointed her that I already knew how. So she got made at me!! How ridiculous! She told me that my father, Atticus, should not teach me anymore because he would do it all wrong. But I told her that he didn't teach me! So Miss Caroline said, "Let's not let our imaginations run away with us, dear. Now you tell your father not to teach you any more. It's best to begin reading with a fresh mind. You tell him I'll take over from here and try to undo the damage. Your father does not know how to teach."

I guess I picked up reading from sitting in my father's lap each night while he read the newspaper out loud and followed along underneath the words with his finger. Miss Caroline also got made at me for knowing how to write!! Calpurnia was to blame for that!! On rainy days she would have me sit and copy out a chapter of the Bible.

When lunchtime rolled around on ten first day of school, Miss Caroline noticed that Walter Cunningham had no lunch. She tried to loan him a quarter to buy lunch, but he was very

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embarrassed and kept saying no. The class expected ME to explain the situation to Miss Caroline, so I did. When I stood up, she asked, "What is it, Jean Louise?"

I replied, "Miss Caroline, he's a Cunningham."

But she didn't understand what I meant. What I was trying to tell her was that the Cunninghams were very poor farmers, but they never took charity. They never took anything that they couldn't pay back. And since Walter couldn't pay Miss Caroline back, he wouldn't take her money.

I remember one time when Atticus did some legal work for Walter Cunningham's father, whose name is also Walter. Mr. Cunningham paid my father back not with money, but with a load of wood and a sack of hickory nuts.

Miss Caroline didn't understand me though. She thought I was being rude and making jokes. So she told me to hold out my hand. I thought she was going to spit in my hand because in Maycomb, kids spit in each other's hands to seal a promise. But instead she patted my hand twelve times with a ruler. All of the kids started laughing when they realized that Miss Caroline thought she was "whipping" me. Most kids were used to being REALLY whipped if they got in trouble, not patted lightly with a ruler! She sent me to the corner until the bell rang for lunch.

As I left I saw Miss Caroline bury her head in her arms because she was having a hard first day. She doesn't understand the way we do things here in Maycomb, and she doesn't understand how poor some of the kids are. I would have felt sorry for her if she had not been so mean to me!! She was a pretty little thing.

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Chapter 3

I was angry at Walter Cunningham for getting me into trouble with Miss Caroline. I wrestled with him and pushed his face into the ground when Jem came over. Jem tells me to stop and invites Walter over to our house for lunch. On the way to the Finch's house we ran past the Radley house. Walter informs Jem that he almost died because he ate the pecans from their tree. The children think that Boo poisons the nuts. During lunch Walter talks with Atticus. He says he has trouble passing the first grade because he has to leave school every spring to help on the farm. While eating lunch, Walter asks for molasses and pours it all over his food. I asked him what crazy thing was he doing and Calpurnia told me to come into the kitchen. I told her that he probably would have poured the molasses into his milk if I didn't stop him. Calpurnia says that no matter whether you think you are better than another, you don't make fun of them while they are a guest in your house. I thought to myself that I would get her and then she'd be sorry. Jem and Walter went back to school ahead of me and I told Atticus he should "pack her off". Atticus says that he will do no such thing and that Calpurnia is valuable to the family and that I should listen to what Cal says.

I returned to school for the afternoon session. During this part of the day. I watched while Miss Caroline tried to control a student named Burris Ewell. Miss Caroline's attention goes to Burris because she notices something crawling in his hair. It's lice! Burris is unaffected by the commotion he had caused. Miss Caroline naively tells Burris to go home and wash his hair. Burris informs her that he only comes the first day anyway just to please the truancy lady. After the first day he never comes back; none of the Ewells still in school come but for the first day. Burris has been in the first grade for three years now. Miss Caroline learns that Burris's mother is dead and his father is a low-class white man who drinks a lot. Miss Caroline tries to get Burris to sit back down, but he gets angry and mean. Little Chuck, another student in the class, helps Miss Caroline and tells Burris to go home menacingly. Burris made Miss Caroline cry and after Burris left, we all tried to comfort her.

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After school let out, we went home and made sure to run past the Radley's house. We met Atticus when he got home from work. Calpurnia had made a special treat of mine for dinner and I was sure that Calpurnia had seen her errors in the way she treated me at lunch.

That night, Atticus asked me if I was ready to read with him. I got real uncomfortable. Atticus noticed that something was bothering me so he asked me what was wrong. I told him all that had happened in the day and even the part about Miss Caroline saying that he had taught me all wrong so we couldn't read together anymore. I told Atticus that I didn't want to go to school anymore. Atticus tries to interpret some of the confusing episodes of the day for me. He says, "If you can learn a simple trick Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view -- … until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." (p. 30). I learned that the Cuninghams are poor but honest people and that Miss Caroline made some honest mistakes. We couldn't expect her to have learned all the ways of Maycomb in one day.

On the conversation of the Ewells, Atticus says that the law bends a little for them. The people allow them certain privileges by being a Ewell and living in their situation. They don't have to go to school and Mr. Bob Ewell, the father, is permitted to hunt and trap animals out of season. He is allowed to do this because he spends all of his welfare money on whiskey and his children to hungry. The food that he hunts goes to feeding his children so nobody would say that he can't hunt even if it is out of season. Atticus says that you can't punish the children for the father's faults.

Atticus and I made a compromise. If I agreed to go to school, then we could continue reading together each night, but we better keep it a secret.

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Chapter 4

My school year went on pretty uneventfully. One day while walking home alone, I ran past the Radley's house as I normally do. This time, however, something caught my eye. I took a deep breath, turned around, and went back.

Next to the Radley house there were two tall oak trees. One of the trees had a knot-hole and there was some shiny tinfoil sticking out of it. I stuck my hand in the knot-hole and pulled out two pieces of chewing gum (Wrigley's Double-Mint). I quickly snatched it up and ran home, even though I wanted to cram it into my mouth. Once I got to the porch, I inspected my find. I sniffed and licked it, and when I didn't die, I put the gum in my mouth.

Jem came home and wondered where I got the gum. I finally told him that I found it in the Radley's tree. Jem yells, "Spit it out right now! Don't you know you're not supposed to even touch the trees over there? You'll get killed if you do!" and I obeyed.

Summer was on the way, which was our favorite season. It also meant that Dill was on the way. On the last day of school, we were let out early. As Jem and I walked past the Radley's oak trees, I saw shiny tinfoil again in the knot-hole. We both ran over, grabbed the prize and hurried home to examine it. It was a small jewelry box covered in tinfoil wrappers. Inside the box were two Indian-head pennies that were really old. Since this was pretty special, I began to think that this knot-hole might be someone's special hiding place. We tried to think of who walked that way and who might be using this as their hiding spot. We didn't know if we should keep them or put them back. Jem suggested that they keep them until school starts and then ask everyone if they're theirs. I noticed Jem looking back at the Radley's house for a long time and seemed to be real thoughtful.

Dill Finally arrives! Miss Rachel picks him up and we meet up with him a little later. Dill suggests picking up where they left off play-acting, but I'm tired of those. I thought it would be fun to roll in the tire. "I'm first!" I announced. I folded myself in the tire and Jem pushed me hard down the sidewalk. I was getting dizzy and couldn't get it to stop because it was going so fast. I hear Jem yelling behind me. All of a sudden I bumped into something and stopped. I lay on the cement for a while and hear Jem's voice: "Scout, get away from there, come on!" I opened my eyes and realized I was at the front of the Radley's steps. Jem came to

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get me and panicked. We both scurried out of there without the tire. Jem and I argued about who should go back and get the tire. Jem scowled and went back for it. He told me I was acting like a girl and there was nothing to it.

Calpurnia called us in for some lemonade. As we enjoyed our lemonade, Jem decided that we should play Boo Radley. What he meant was that we would play act using the Radleys as our characters. All throughout the summer we perfected our act. We added dialogue and made it long. One day when we were rehearsing one act, Atticus watched us. He told us that he hoped we were not pay acting about the Radleys, Jem and I argued over whether or not we should continue acting this out since Atticus told us not to.

Atticus's seeing us do this play-acting was the first reason I wanted to stop doing this. The second reason had to do with what happened earlier that day. After I rolled into the Radley's yard, I heard not only Jem's voice yelling but also another sound. It was a soft sound. Someone inside of the house was laughing.

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Chapter 5

So, I thought we should stop playing "Boo Radley" because Atticus had warned us not to. Jem said we should just change the names of the characters and then nobody would know! Dill agreed. Dill, by the way, was being annoying. He had asked me earlier in the summer to marry him, then he promptly forgot about it. He had said I was the only girl he would ever love, but then he ignored me. I beat him up twice but it did no good, he kept becoming better friends with Jem.

Since Dill and Jem were becoming so close, I was beginning to feel left out. So I spent some time becoming friendly with Miss Maudie Atkinson. Miss Maudie was a nice lady who lived across the street. She had always let us play in her yard, but we had never really been close to her. Now Maudie hated being indoors. She thought that time spent indoors was time wasted. She was a widow who worked in her garden wearing an old straw hat and men's overalls. She was pretty cool. She was honest, treated us with respect, and didn't like gossip.

One day I noticed that Miss Maudie had two minute gold prongs clipped to her eyeteeth. When I admired them and hoped I would have some eventually, she said, "Look here." With a click of her tongue she thrust out her dentures. Cool! I think that was her way of letting me know that she really considered me a friend!

Miss Maudie made the best cakes in the neighborhood. She would yell, "Jem Finch, Scout Finch, Charles Baker Harris, come here!" That meant that she had baked some small cakes for us, and we went running!

One evening I asked, "Miss Maudie, do you think Boo Radley's still alive?"

"His name's Arthur and he's alive," she said.

"How do you know?"

"What a morbid question. I know he's alive, Jean Louise, because I haven't seen anyone carry out a body!"

"Jem said that maybe he died and they stuffed him up in the chimney", I added.

Miss Maudie said, "Tsk. Tsk. Jem gets more like Jack Finch every day. They're both such wise-guys!"

Jack Finch was my uncle, Atticus's brother, and Miss Maudie had known him since they were children. Miss Maudie had grown up near Finch's Landing and used to play with Jack.

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Uncle Jack visited our house every Christmas, and every Christmas he yelled across the street for Miss Maudie to come marry him. He was such a jokester! Miss Maudie would call back, "Call a little louder, Jack Finch, and they'll hear you at the post office!"

Miss Maudie continued her answer about Boo Radley. "Arthur Radley just stays in the house, that's all. Wouldn't you stay in the house if you didn't want to come out?"

"Yessum, but I'd wanta come out. Why doesn't he?"

Miss Maudie explained that Mr. Radley was a "foot-washing Baptist" which means that he believes anything that's a pleasure is a sin. She said that some of those Baptists even passed by her house once and told her that she and her flowers were going to hell. They thought that Miss Maudie spent too much time outdoors and not enough time inside the house reading the Bible.

Miss Maudie said that these people were taking the Bible too literally. She said, "Sometimes the Bible in the hand of one man is worse than a whiskey bottle in the hand of – oh, of someone like your father." She also said that "there are just some kind of men who—who're so busy worrying about the next world that they've never learned to enjoy this one. Like the Radleysv."

Miss Maudie said that all the stories about Boo were gossip – from people like Stephanie Crawford, who was always in everybody's business. She said that she remembered Arthur as a really nice boy.

The next day I caught Jem and Dill planning something. They finally told me what it was. They were going to try to get a note to Boo Radley!! They were going to put the note on the end of a fishing pole and stick it through the shutters. If anyone came along the street, Dill would ring the bell to warn Jem. Dill explained what the note said, "We're askin' him real politely to come out sometimes, and tell us what he does in there – we said we wouldn't hurt him and we'd buy him an ice cream." I told Dill that he and jem were crazy and that Boo would kill us!

I was watching Jem try to get the note in the window, when all of a sudden we heard Dill ringing his bell! I thought I would turn around to see Boo Radley with bloody fangs; instead, I saw Dill ringing the bell with all his might in Atticus's face. Uh, oh!

When Atticus found out what we were trying to do, he told Jem to stop tormenting Arthur Radley. He continued on, saying that what Arthur did was his own business, not ours. If he

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wanted to come out, he would, and if he didn't, he had a right to stay inside without inquisitive children harassing him. He ended by saying that he did not want to see us playing the asinine game he had seen us playing or make fun of anybody on this street or in this town!!

Jem said, "We weren't making fun of him, we were just…"

"So that WAS what you were doing, wasn't it? You were acting out the Radley's life story as I suspected!" said Atticus accusingly.

Jem got flustered and realized that Atticus had tricked him into admitting that the "game" they had been playing was really us acting out the gossip we had heard about the Radley family. When Atticus said, "You want to be a lawyer, don't you," Jem realized that Atticus had used the oldest lawyer's trick on him! Atticus had pretended he knew we were playing Boo Radley, when really he only suspected it, and then Jem confessed without realizing!

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Chapter 6

On Dill's last night with us that summer, before he went back to Mississippi to start school, Dill noticed Mr. Avery on his front porch. Dill said, "Golly, looka yonder." At first we saw nothing, but then we saw an arc of water falling from the leaves and splashing into the yellow circle of the street light ten feet away. Dill said, "Mrs. Avery must drink a gallon a day!" So I realized that Mr. Avery was peeing off his porch!! And then Dill and Jem argued over which one of them could pee further, and of course I felt left out again being a girl and all.

Later that night Dill and Jem said they were going to peep in the Radley's window to see if they could get a look at Boo. They said that if I didn't want to go with them I could go straight home and keep my mouth shut about it. I said, "Jem, don't…"

Jem said, "Scout, I'm telling you for the last time, shut your trap or go home – I declare to the Lord you're gettin' more like a girl every day!" So, I shut up and joined them. We snuck under a barbed wire fence and through a creaky gate into the Radley's yard. We had to be very quiet, and I was so nervous! We gave Dill a boost up to look in the window, but he didn't see anything. So we went around back and Jem crept across the porch and peeked in a window. That was when I noticed the shadow. It was the shadow of a man with a hat on, and it was moving towards Jem! The moonlight was bright enough to make shadows that night. Dill noticed it too, and then Jem. We were petrified!! The shadow stopped about a foot beyond Jem. Its arm came out from its side, dropped, and was still. Then it turned and moved back across Jem, walked along the porch and off the side of the house, returning as it had come.

We all made a run for it! We ran to the gate, and as we ran through the collards, I tripped. Then I heard the roar of a shotgun! We all scurried toward the barbed wire fence, but Jem got caught in it as he tried to go under. His pants were caught and he couldn't get them free, so he kicked his pants off and started running in his underwear!

After resting for a minute, we realized that because of the shotgun noise, the whole neighborhood was standing around in the Radley's front yard to see what was going on. We realized that we had better show up or else people might start to realize that it was US sneaking around in their yard! When we got there we saw Mr. Nathan Radley (Boo's older brother) standing with a shotgun by his side. Atticus was there, and Miss Maudie, Miss Stephanie Crawford, Miss Rachel (Dill's aunt), and Mr. Avery.

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"What happened," asked Jem, as if he didn't know.

Miss Maudie replied, "Mrs. Radley says he shot at a Negro in his collard patch."

"Did he hit him?"

"No," said Miss Stephanie. "Shot in the air. Scared him pale, though. Says if anybody sees a white n****r around, that's the one. Says he's got another bullet waitin' for the next sound he ears in that patch, an' next time he won't aim high, be it dog, n****r, or – Jem Finch!?" Miss Stephanie had just noticed Jem standing there without any pants on!

"Yes, Ma'am?" asked Jem.

Atticus spoke. "Where're your pants, son?"

Dill spoke up quickly. He thought of a good excuse so nobody would suspect that it was really US in the Radley's yard. He told everyone that he had won Jem's pants from him in a game of strip poker. Jem and I relaxed, thinking this was a good excuse.

But Miss Rachel, Dill's aunt, was very upset. She didn't think we should be playing poker!! Gambling was a bad thing!! But we said we were only betting with matches, not with real money. So they calmed down a little. Sure, matches were dangerous, but gambling was <u>really</u> dangerous!! Kids shouldn't be gambling! It is kind of ironic that they're more concerned about us playing with cards than about us playing with matches!!

In the middle of the night, Jem had to sneak out to go back and get his pants, which were still stuck in the Radley's fence. If he didn't get the pants back, Atticus would know that Dill's strip poker excuse wasn't true. He didn't want Atticus to find out what he had done because he knew Atticus would be very disappointed in him. Jem said we shouldn't have gone to the Radley place like that. It was wrong. I was scared to let Jem go back there alone in the middle of the night, but he went anyway. After a while, he came back and crept into bed. Thank goodness!

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Chapter 7

I left Jem alone when he got back from the Radley's. I tried to do as Atticus taught me and walk around in Jem's skin. I tried to imagine what it would have been like to go back to the Radley's in the middle of the night. I would have been terrified so I let Jem alone.

I started school again: the 2nd grade. It was just as bad as the first grade. I was still not allowed to read, but one good thing was that I stayed as late as Jem and we walked home together. On our way home one afternoon, Jem told me what happened that night.

"When I went back for my breeches – they were all in a tangle when I was getting' out of 'em, I couldn't get them loose. When I went back-" Jem took a deep breath. "When I went back, they were folded across the fence… like they were expectin' me."

"Across—"

"And something else – "Jem's voice was flat. "Show you when we get home. They'd been sewed up. Not like a lady sewed 'em, like somethin' I'd try to do. All crooked. It's almost like –"

"—somebody knew you were comin' back for 'em."

Jem shuddered. "Like somebody was readin' my mind… like somebody could tell what I was gonna do. Can't anybody tell what I'm gonna do lest they live in the house with you, and even I can't tell sometimes."

We kept walking and noticed in the knot-hole of the tree that there was a ball of gray twine. I didn't think we should take it 'cuz it's probably someone's hiding place. Jem and I decided to leave it there for a few days and if it was still there then we'd take it. The next day it was still there so we considered anything else we found there was ours to take from then on.

Second grade was not great. Jem told me that you don't learn anything of value until 6th grade which is what he was in. He was learning about Egyptians and thought they were the smartest since they invented all kinds of great things.

One day in October we were walking by the tree in the Radley's yard and noticed something white in the knot-hole. I pulled out two small images carved in soap. One was the figure of a boy and the other was in a crude dress. Jem told me that he had never seen anything as good as these before. As I looked closer, the boy figure was wearing shorts and this hair fell

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to his eyebrows. I gazed up at Jem and noticed his hair parted down to his eyebrows too. Jem looked from the girl-doll to me. The goril-doll wore bangs. So did I.

"These are us," he said.

"Who did 'em, you reckon?"

"Who do we know around here who whittles?" he asked.

"Mr. Avery."

"Mrs. Avery just does like this. I mean carves."

We took the figures home and Jem put them in his trunk. We didn't' know who could have done these carvings.

A week or so later we found a whole package of chewing gum in the knot-hole, which we enjoyed. The following week we found a tarnished medal. We showed it to Atticus and he said it was a spelling medal, that before we were born the Maycomb County schools had spelling contests and awarded medals to the winners. Atticus told us that someone must have lost it but he didn't remember anybody who had ever won one.

The biggest treasure we found in the knot-hole came four days later. We found a pocket watch that wouldn't run, on a chain with an aluminum knife. Atticus thought it would probably be worth ten dollars.

Jem thought it would be a good idea if we wrote a letter to whoever's leaving these things. I thought that would be a nice idea to thank 'em.

"I don't get it, I just don't get it – I don't know why, Scout…" He looked toward the living room. "I've gotta good mind to tell Atticus – no, I reckon not."

"He had been on the verge of telling me something all evening; his fact would brighten and he would lean toward me, then he would change his mind. He changed it again.

The next morning we took our letter to the knot-hole and were shocked to see it filled with cement.

"Don't you cry, now, Scout…don't cry now, don't worry –" he muttered at me all the way to school.

The next day we finally saw Mr. Radley.

"Hidy do, Mr. Nathan," he said.

"Morning Jem, Scout," said Mr. Radley, as he went by.

"Mr. Radley," said Jem.

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Mr. Radley turned around.

"Mr. Radley, ah – did you put cement in that hole in that tree down yonder?"

"Yes," he said. "I filled it up."

"Why'd you do it, sir?"

"Tree's dying. You plug 'em with cement when they're sick. You ought to know that, Jem."

We went on to school not saying a thing. After school we ran into Atticus and Jem asked him, "Atticus, look down yonder at that tree please, sir."

"What tree, son?"

"The one on the corner of the Radley lot comin' from school."

"Yes?"

"Is that tree dyin'?"

"Why no, son, I don't think so. Look at the leaves, they're all green and full, no brown patches anywhere—"

"It ain't even sick?"

"That tree's as healthy as you are, Jem. Why?"

"Mr. Nathan Radley said it was dyin'."

"Well maybe it is. I'm sure Mr. Radley knows more about his trees that we do."

Atticus left us then and eventually I told Jem to come on inside. He told me he would after a while.

He stood there until nightfall and I noticed when he came in he had been crying, but I thought it odd that I had not heard him.

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Chapter 8

It was one of the coldest winters Maycomb County had seen in awhile. It as also the winter that Mrs. Radley died. No one really noticed because she was rarely seen. Jem and I thought that Boo had finally gotten her.

The next morning I woke up with a fright. I screamed and Atticus came running from the bathroom.

"The world's endin', Atticus! Please do something—!" I dragged him to the window and pointed.

"No it's not," he said. "It's snowing."

The phone rang and Eula May, the telephone operator, called and said there would be no school. Jem and I ran to the backyard and it was covered with a feeble layer of soggy snow. We decided to make a snowman. Atticus didn't think we'd have enough snow to make a snowball.

Miss Maudie yelled over to be careful with her flowers. She was not happy about the snow and was worried about the snow and freeze ruining her azaleas. We asked her if we could borrow some of her snow for our snowman. Jem filled five laundry baskets with earth and two with snow.

"Don't you think this is kind of a mess?" I asked.

"Looks messy now, but it won't later," he said.

Jem scooped up an armful of dirt and patted it into a round shape for the torso.

"Jem, I ain't ever heard of a n****r snowman," I said.

"He won't be black long," he grunted.

We couldnt' wait for Atticus to come home and see our creation. Atticus complimented Jem and thought whatever he ended up being in life, he'd never run out of ideas. Atticus told us we needed to disguise our snowman by putting an apron and broom since it looked too much like Mr. Avery.

It was one of the coldest nights in Maycomb's history. I went to bed and minutes later, it seemed, I was awakened. "Is it morning already?"

"Baby, get up."

Atticus was holding out my bathrobe and coat. "Put your robe on first," he said.

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We went to the front door and Miss Maudie's house was on fire. Atticus told us to go down and stand in front of the Radley's house. All the men were trying to help by carrying out her furniture and the fire truck was having difficulty with it being cold and all. Mr. Avery got wedged in the window trying to get out of the house and we were scared for him. He finally got free.

I became aware that I was slowly freezing. Jem tried to keep me warm but I was still cold.

It was dawn before the men began to leave. Miss Maudie's house was destroyed so she would be staying with Miss Stephanie for the time being.

Atticus looked over at me with curiosity and then sternness. "I thought I told you and Jem to stay put," he said.

"Why, we did. We stayed –"

"Then whose blanket is that?"

"Blanket?"

"Yes, Ma'am, blanket. It isn't ours."

I saw that I was clutching a brown woolen blanket and was just as bewildered as Atticus. We hadn't moved an inch and Jem didn't know how it got there too. Atticus grinned and said, "look like all of Maycomb was out tonight, in one way or another…"

Jem seemed to have lost his mind. He started telling Atticus all of our secrets. About the hiding place, Mrs. Radley covering the knot-hole with cement, pants and all.

Atticus told him to slow down and that it is probably a good idea that we keep the blanket to ourselves. "Someday, maybe, Scout can thank him for covering her up."

"Thank who?" I asked.

"Boo Radley. You were so busy looking at the fire you didn't know it when he put the blanket around you."

I got all nervous and almost threw up with the thought.

Miss Maudie had a positive outlook on what happened to her house. She was actually happy now because she would have more room for her flowers now that she can build a smaller house. The only thing she was worried about was all the danger and commotion it caused. Miss Maudie continued working on her garden and yard.

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Chapter 9

I was ready to punch Cecil Jacobs in the face. He had announced in the schoolyard the day before the Scout Finch's daddy defended niggers, Atticus?"

I asked Atticus, "Do you defend niggers, Atticus?"

Atticus replied, "Of course I do. Don't say nigger, Scout. That's common."

"'s what everybody at school says."

"From now on it'll be everybody less one –"

"Well if you don't want me to grow up talkin' that way, why do you send me to school?"

Atticus looked at me amused. Atticus said that he was defending a Negro by the name of Tom Robinson. He lives in the settlement beyond the town dump. He goes to Calpurnia's church and she knows his family well. She says that they are clean living folk. There are people who say I shouldn't defend him.

"If you shouldn't be defendin' him, then why are you doin' it?"

"For a number of reasons," said Atticus. "The main one is, if I didn't I couldn't hold up my head in town, I couldn't even represent this county in legislature, I couldn't even tell you or Jem not to do something again."

"You mean if you didn't defend that man, Jem and me wouldn't have to mind you any more?"

"That's about right."

"Why?"

"Because I could never ask you to mind me again. Scout simply because of the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one's mine, I guess. You might hear some ugly talk about it at school, but do one thing for me if you will: you just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't let 'em get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change… it's a good one even if it does resist learning.

"Atticus, are we going to win it?"

"No, honey."

"Then why –"

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"Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win," Atticus said.

I tried to keep this in mind when I wanted to fight Cecil Jacobs in the schoolyard. I knew that if I did fight him, I would be letting Atticus down.

Christmas was coming and I felt mixed about it. On the good side, Uncle Jack Finch was coming and he would spend a week with us. On the bad side, we would have to see Aunt Alexandra and Francis. We went to Finch's Landing every Christmas day. I didn't like spending time with Francis. He was a year older than I and I avoided him.

Aunt Alexandra was Atticus's sister and Francis was her grandson. I was sure she was swapped at birth and that my grandparents had gotten the wrong child. Uncle Jack was the baby of the family.

We were on our way to pick up Uncle Jack at the train station on Christmas Eve. He had two packages with him. I was curious about what they were. When we got home we decorated the tree until bedtime. The next morning we dived for the packages. They were from Atticus. He had Uncle Jack get them for us. We had asked for them – air rifles.

We got to Finch's Landing. I asked Francis what he got for Christmas. "Just what I asked for," he said. Francis had requested a pair of knee-pants, a red leather booksack, five shirts and an untied bow tie.

"That's nice," I lied. "Jem and me got air rifles, and Jem got a chemistry set –"

"A toy one, I reckon."

"No, a real one." He's gonna make me some invisible ink and I'm gonna write to Dill in it."

Francis was such a boring child. He told Aunt Alexandra everything he knew and Aunt Alexandra then told Atticus. She didn't like the way I dressed in overalls and that I couldn't possibly hope to be a lady if I wore breeches. Aunt Alexandra's vision of me involved playing with small stoves, tea sets, and wearing the Add-A-Pearl necklace she gave me when I was born.

Francis really got me angry. First he talked bad about Dill and then about Atticus defending Tom Robinson. "Grandma says it's bad enough he lets you run wild, but now he's turned out a n****r-lover we'll never be able to walk the streets of Maycomb again. He's ruinin' the family, that's what he's doin'."

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I got so mad at him I chased him to the kitchen that is separate from the house. He kept calling Atticus a "nigger-lover" and I had to punch him in the face. I got punished by Uncle Jack and told him I hated him. He didn't listen to my side of the story. I ran to Atticus for comfort and finally told Uncle Jack my side of the story. Uncle Jack got real mad at Francis when he found out what he had said about Atticus. He was going to tell Atticus, but I begged him not to. I would prefer him to think that Francis and I fought over something else.

Later when Atticus and Jack were talking, Jack didn't tell Atticus the specifics of his and my conversation, but he did say that he learned a lot from me today. He was also upset that Jem and I were going to have to learn about some ugly things in our lives. Atticus hoped that Jem and I would go to him to get answers about what is going to happen in the trial rather than learning it from the town.

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Chapter 10

Atticus was old and feeble: he was nearly fifty. Jem and I were disappointed that he wasn't more like the younger fathers in Maycomb. Atticus was always too tired to play football with Jem like the other dads. He wore glasses because he was nearly blind in his left eye.

When he gave us our air-rifles Atticus wouldn't teach us to shoot. Uncle Jack taught us and explained that Atticus wasn't interested in guns. Atticus said to Jem one day, **"I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird."**

Later I asked Miss Maudie why Atticus said that. She said, **"Your father's right. Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens; they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird."**

I complained to Miss Maudie that Atticus was too old to do anything. She said that he was a great lawyer and the best checker-player in town and that I should be proud of him.

One day Jem and I were walking down the street with our new air-rifles and Jem spotted something. "Whatcha looking at?" I asked.

"That old dog down yonder," he said.

"That's Harry Johnson's dog who's named Tim Johnson, ain't it?"

The dog was acting strangely, and Jem got worried, thinking it might have rabies. He called to Cal to come out in the street to look at the dog.

When Calpurnia saw the dog, she was sure it had rabies. She called on the telephone to Atticus's office. "Mr. Finch! This is Cal. I swear to God there's a mad dog down the street a piece – he's comin' this way – it's old Tim Johnson." Then Cal called the operator and asked her to call Miss Rachel (Dill's aunt) and Miss Stephanie Crawford and anyone else on the street to warn them to lock their doors and stay inside. It is very dangerous for anyone to be bitten by a dog with rabies.

Mr. Heck Tate was the sheriff of Maycomb County. He showed up with a rifle. Atticus showed up as well. The dog was pretty far down the street, but it was headed towards the Finch's place. Atticus told Heck that he better go ahead and shoot the dog – put it out of its

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misery. But Heck handed the rifle to Atticus and said, "Take him, Mr. Finch." Jem and I couldn't believe that Heck would want our father to try to shoot!!

Atticus said, "Don't be silly, Heck. You shoot him."

"Mr. Finch, this is a one-shot job."

Atticus shook his head vehemently. "Don't just stand there, Heck! He won't wait all day for you—"

Heck said, "For God's sake, Mr. Finch, look where he is! If I miss, the bullet will go straight into the Radley house! I can't shoot that well and you know it!"

Atticus replied, "I haven't shot a gun in thirty years –"

Mr. Tate almost threw the rifle at Atticus. "I'd feel mighty comfortable if you did now," he said.

Jem and I watched our father take the gun and walk out into the middle of the street. He walked quickly, but I felt like I was watching the whole thing in slow motion. I couldn't understand why the sheriff would want Atticus to do the shooting.

Atticus pushed his glasses to his forehead; they slipped down, and he dropped them in the street. In the silence, I heard them crack. Atticus rubbed his eyes and chin; we saw him blink hard. With movements so swift they seemed simultaneous, Atticus's hand yanked a ball-tipped lever as he brought the gun to his shoulder. The rifle cracked. Tim Johnson leaped, flopped over and crumpled on the sidewalk in a brown-and-white heap. He died instantly. Atticus had shot him right between the eyes!

Mr. Tate said, "You haven't forgot much, Mr. Finch. You're still a great shooter."

Miss Maudie yelled across the street, "I saw that, One –Shot Finch!"

Jem was totally stunned! So was I. Mr. Tate saw our shock and said, "What's the matter with you, boy, can't you talk? Didn't you know your daddy's –"

Atticus interrupted, "Hush, Heck. Let's go back to work."

After Atticus and Mr. Tate left Miss Maudie told us that Atticus was known as Ol' One-Shot because when he was younger, he was the best shot in all of Maycomb. We were so impressed! When I asked why he never goes hunting, Miss Maudie said, "If your father's anything, he's civilized in his heart. Shooting is a gift of God – a talent – oh, you have to practice to make it perfect, but shootin's different from playing the pinao. I think maybe Atticus

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put down his gun when he realized that God had given him an unfair advantage over most living things. I guess he decided he wouldn't shoot till he had to, and he had to today."

I said, "It seems like he should be proud of his talent."

Miss Maudie relplied, "People in their right minds never take pride in their talents."

I didn't understand all of this, and I told Jem that we sure would have something to brag about at school on Monday – now that we knew our dad was the best shooter in Maycomb. But Jem told me not to say anything at school. He seemed to think that bragging wasn't so important anymore, that it wasn't a very grown-up thing to do. He said, "Atticus is real old, but I wouldn't care if he couldn't do anything – I wouldn't care if he couldn't do a blessed thing. Atticus is a gentleman, just like me!" It seems Jem realized that a gentleman doesn't brag about his talents, and doesn't use his talents to take advantage of other people or animals.

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Chapter 11

Mrs. Dubose lived two doors down from us. She was a mean lady. She lived alone except for a Negro girl who took care of her. Mrs. Dubose was very old. She spent most of her day in bed and the rest of it in a wheelchair. There was a rumor that she kept a pistol hidden in her shawl.

Jem and I hated her. Whenever we passed her house, she would glare at us and ask us questions about what we were doing. She would say we were up to no good. She said we wouldn't grow up to be anything good. Even if I tried to be nice and say, "Hey, Mrs. Dubose," she would yell at me, "Don't you say hey to me, you ugly girl! You say good afternoon, Mrs. Dubose!" She called us sassy, disrespectful mutts and that it was a disgrace that Atticus let us run wild.

When Jem complained once to Atticus about the way she treated us, he said, "Easy does it, Son. She's an old lady and she's ill. You just hold your head high and be a gentleman. Whatever she says to you, it's your job not to let her make you mad." And when Atticus passed her place, he would sweep off his hat, wave gallantly to her and say, "Good evening, Mrs. Dubose! You look like a picture this evening." (I never heard Atticus say a picture of <u>what</u> though!!) It was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived.

One day, Jem and I were walking by her place when she asked us where we were going. She gave us a hard time and we tried to be nice. But then she started yelling, "Don't you lie to me! Jeremy Finch, Maudie Atkinson told me you broke down her flowers this morning. She's going to tell your father and then you'll wish you were never born! I bet he'll send you to reform school!" Jem knew that none of this was true and told Mrs. Dubose that he hadn't ruined Miss Maudie's flowers.

"Don't you contradict me!!" Mrs. Dubose yelled. "And YOU—" she pointed an arthritic finger at me…"What are you doing in those overalls?? You should be in a dress, young lady!"

Jem pulled me along and said, "Come on, Scout. Don't pay any attention to her, just hold your head high and be a gentleman."

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But Mrs. Dubose yelled, “Not only will you grow up to be nothing, but your father is defending a nigger! Your father is no better than the niggers and trash he works for!” Jem and I couldn’t believe that Mrs. Dubose could be so mean and so racist.

On our way by her house later in the day, Mrs. Dubose was not on the porch. Jem was overcome with anger for what she had said about Atticus, and broke the promise he had made to Atticus to hold his head high and be a gentleman. He took my baton and used it to ruin Mrs. Dubose’s camellia bush. He cut the flowers off of every bush in her yard. He was so mad!

We went home and waited nervously for Atticus. We were scared of what he would do when he found out about what Jem did. Finally Atticus showed up holding a camellia flower. “Are you responsible for this?”

“Yes sir,” Jem replied quietly.

“Why’d you do it?”

Jem said softly, “She said you lawed for niggers and trash.” Jem was obviously feeling really bad about what he had done. He had his head down.

Atticus said, “I understand that people have been giving you a hard time about the fact that I’m defending Tom Robinson, but to do something like this to a sick old lady is inexcusable. I strongly advise you to go down and have a talk with Mrs. Dubose. Come straight home afterward.”

Once Jem had gone, Atticus and I talked. He said, “Scout, when summer comes you’ll have to keep your head about far worse things because that’s when Tom Robinson’s trial will be. I know it’s not fair to you and Jem, but sometimes we have to make the best of things, and I have to defend Tom Robinson because it’s the right thing to do. I couldn’t live with myself if I didn’t do the right thing. Even though other people might think I’m wrong for defending a black man, I know that it’s right.

When Jem came back, he told us that Mrs. Dubose wanted Jem to read out loud to her as punishment for what he had done. He had to go every afternoon and Saturdays for one month and read out loud for two hours each time. Atticus said that Jem would have to go.

So I went to Mrs. Dubose’s house with Jem. Mrs. Dubose was in bed, and for a minute I felt kind of sorry for her, until she said, “So you brought that dirty little sister of yours, did you?”

Jem began reading and Mrs. Dubose would correct him sometimes. But after a while, we noticed that she wasn’t listening. She seemed to be in a lot of pain or something and kind of

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unconscious. Then the alarm clock went off, Jessie her helper came in and told us that it was time for her medicine and that we could go home. We noticed that this same thing happened each day, except the alarm clock would go off later and later.

One day I asked Atticus what "Nigger-lover" meant because Mrs. Dubose had called him that once. Atticus said, "Scout, nigger-lover is just one of those terms that don't mean anything—like snot-nose. It's hard to explain—ignorant, trashy people us it when they think somebody's favoring Negroes over and above themselves. It's an ugly work to use, and you or I should never say it."

We finally finished our month of reading to Mrs. Dubose. One day a month later Atticus was called down to Mrs. Dubose's house and he came back carrying a box. He told us that Mrs. Dubose had died. He said that she had been sick for a long time and that her "fits" (when she would seem to be in pain and go unconscious) were because she had been addicted to morphine, a pain killer. She was trying to break this addiction before she died. Most people would have just kept taking the morphine so they wouldn't have to be in pain during the last months of their life, but she wanted to die free of an addiction. So, when she had Jem read to her, it was meant to distract her from the pain that not taking the morphine caused. She would take the morphine later and later every day, which is why we had to read later and later before the alarm went off. Atticus handed Jem the box he had brought back. In it was a beautiful camellia flower. Jem thought she had sent it to him to be mean, but really she was trying to say that she forgave him.

Atticus said, "You know, she was a great lady."

Jem asked, "How could you call her a lady after all those terrible things she said about you?!"

"She was a lady. She had her own view about things, a lot different from mine, maybe…son, I wanted you to read to her because I wanted you to learn something from her. **I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do. Mrs. Dubose won, all ninety-eight pounds of her. She broke her addiction to morphine, which was a very hard thing to do. She was the bravest person I ever knew." Jem burned the box, but he kept touching the flower petals all night.**

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Part 2

Chapter 12

Jem was twelve. He was getting so moody and hard to live with. After Mrs. Dubose had been dead for a couple of weeks, he started changing and telling me what to do. Jem hollered, "It's time you started bein' a girl and acting right!" I burst into tears and ran to Calpurnia. Calpurnia told me not to fret, that he was growing up. She even started calling him Mister Jem like he was a grown up. I spend a lot of time with Calpurnia waiting for summer when Dill would come to Maycomb.

Summer came and Dill had not come. Dill sent a letter and said that he had a new father and that he would have to stay in Meridian. The state legislature was called to an emergency session and Atticus left us for two weeks.

One Sunday we went with Calpurnia to her church. She got us all clean and spent time going over our clothes. My dress had so much starch in it, it came up like a tent when I sat down.

"It's like we were goin' to Mardi Gras," said Jem. "What's all this for, Cal?"

"I don't want anybody sayin' I don't look after my children," she muttered. "Mister Jem, you absolutely can't wear that tie with that suit. It's green."

Calpurnia took us to First Purchase African M.E. Church. It was called First Purchase because it was paid for from the first earnings of freed slaves. Negroes worshipped in it on Sundays and white men gambled in it on weekdays.

As we entered the churchyard, the men stepped back and took off their hats and the women crossed their arms at their wrists. They made a pathway for us. A woman's voice came from behind us, "What you up to, Miss Cal?"

"What you want, Lula?" she asked in a tone I had never heard.

"I wants to know why you bringin' white chillun to a n****r church."

"They's my comp'ny," said Calpurnia. Again I thought her voice was strange: she was talking like the rest of them.

"Yeah, an' I reckon you's comp'ny at the Finch house durin' the week."

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"Don't you fret," Calpurnia whispered to me and then said to Lula, "Stop right there, nigger."

Lula stopped and said, "You ain't got no business bringing' white chillun here – they got their church, we got our'n. It is our church, ain't it, Miss Cal?"

We told Calpurnia that we wanted to go home that we weren't welcome here. When I looked up Calpurnia had amusement in her eyes and others were coming toward us. Lula was gone and we were surrounded by others. One of them, Zeebo, said to not pay attention to Lula and that they were glad to have us there.

Inside church service was beginning. Reverend Sykes started by making some announcements. I noticed that there were no hymnals and when I went to ask Calpurnia about it, she told me to be quiet. Reverend Sykes said that they would be taking up a collection today and for the next three Sundays for Tom Robinson to help out his wife, Helen, and family.

Reverend Sykes said that we would begin services by singing hymn number two seventy-three. This was too much for me.. "How're we gonna sing it if there ain't no hymn books?"

Calpurnia smiled. "Hush baby," she whispered, "you'll see in a minute."

Zeebo cleared this throat and read in a voice like the rumble of distant artillery,

"There's a land beyond the river."

Miraculously on pitch, a hundred voices sang out Zeebo's words. The last syllable, held to a hum, was followed by Zeebo saying, "That we call the sweet forever."

Music again swelled around us: the last note lingered and Zeebo met it with the next line.

Reverend Sykes went into his sermon and after that came the collection. After the coffee can went around the church, Reverend Sykes emptied the coins into his hand and announced that it was not enough. He said that we must have ten dollars. He even had one of the church members close the doors until we had the ten dollars collected. We put in our dimes. Slowly and painfully the ten dollars was collected.

At the end of service when we were all leaving, Reverend Sykes said to us, "We were 'specially glad to have you all here," said Reverend Sykes. "The church has no better friend than your daddy."

My curiosity got to me and I asked, "Why were you all takin' up a collection for Tom Robinson's wife?"

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"Didn't you hear why?" asked Reverend Sykes. "Helen's got three little'uns and she can't go out to work—"

"Why can't she take 'em with her, Reverend?" I asked. Callpurnia put her hand on my shoulder. On the way home I asked Cal why no one would hire Helen. She told us that it's because of what folks say Tom's done. I didn't know what Tom had done so I asked. Cal sighted, "old Mr. Bob Ewell accused him of rapin' his girl an' had him arrested an' put in jail—"

"Mr. Ewell?" I thought and remembered what Atticus had said that they were absolute trash and I had never heard Atticus talk about anyone like that before. Cal said that I'd have to ask Atticus the questions about this.

Calpurnia did explain why they sang hymns the way they did. It's called linin' and it's been done like that for as long as she can remember. Jem thought it would be a good idea to take up a collection to get some hymn-books. Cal said it would do no good since she only knows about four people who can read. Zeebo, who is Calpurnia's oldest son, was taught by her and Cal was taught by Miss Maudie's aunt, old Miss Buford.

Another thing I was curious about and had to ask Cal about it was the way she talked around the other colored folks. "Cal," I asked, "why to you talk n****r-talk to your folks when you know it's not right?"

"Well, in the first place, I'm black—"

"That doesn't mean you hafta talk that way when you know better," said Jem.

"It's right hard to say," she said. "Suppose you and Scout talked colored-folks' talk at home it'd be out of place, wouldn't it? Now what if I talked white-folks' talk at church, and with my neighbors? They'd think I was puttin' on airs to beat Moses."

"But Cal, you know better," I said.

"It's not necessary to tell all you know. It's not ladylike—in the second place, folks don't like to have somebody around knowin' more than they do. It aggravates 'em. You're not gonna change any of them by talkin' right, they've go to want to learn themselves, and when they don't want to learn there's nothing you can do but keep your mouth shut or talk their language."

As we approached the house Jem told me to look on the porch. I looked and saw Aunt Alexandra sitting in a rocking chair.

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Chapter 13

Aunt Alexandra had Calpurnia put her bags in the front bedroom. The next thing she did was to tell me to stop scratching my head. I asked her if she was just here for a visit and she told us that she and Atticus had decided that she should come stay for awhile. "We decided that it would be best for you to have some feminine influence. It won't be many years, Jean Louise, before you become interested in clothes and boys—"

I thought many things to myself like the fact that I had Cal and that I wouldn't be interested in boys for many years and that I would never be interested in clothes. But I kept my mouth shut.

Later that afternoon Atticus came home. He told us that they had decided it was best for Aunt Alexandra to stay with us. I knew that it was more her idea than it was Atticus's. She had a way of deciding what was best for the family.

Everyone in Maycomb welcomed Aunt Alexandra. Miss Maudie baked a cake, Miss Rachel had her over for coffee, and Mr. Nathan Radley came in the front yard and said he was glad to see her.

Life resumed as if she had always lived with us. Aunt Alexandra never missed a chance to point out the shortcomings of others. Everyone in Maycomb seemed to have a Streak: A Drinking Streak, a Gambling Streak, a Mean Streak, a Funny Streak. She was also very occupied with heredity: who came from what family. I had received the impression the Fine Folks were people who did the best they could with the sense they had, but Aunt Alexandra was of the opinion that the longer a family had been squatting on one patch of land the finer it was.

Some afternoons Aunty had the Maycomb ladies over. "Jean Louise, come speak to these ladies."

When I came to the doorway, Aunt Alexandra looked like she almost regretted calling me over because I usually was mud-splattered or dirty.

"Speak to your Cousin Lily," she said one afternoon, when she had trapped me in the hall.

"Who?" I said.

"Your Cousin Lily Brooke," said Aunt Alexandra.

"She our cousin? I didn't know that."

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Aunt Alexandra managed to smile to Cousin Lily that conveyed a gentle apology to her and a firm disapproval to me. I knew I was in for it when Cousin Lily Left.

That night Atticus came into Jem's room where we both were. He was uncomfortable and tried to tell us something. "Your aunt has asked me to try and impress upon you and Jean Louise that you are not from run-of-the-mill people, that you are the product of several generations gentle breeding –" Atticus paused. "Gentle bredding," he continued, "and that you should try to live up to your name—" Atticus persevered in spite of us: "She asked me to tell you you must try to behave like the little lady and gentleman that you are. She wants to talk to you about the family and what it's meant to Maycomb County through the years, so you'll have some idea of who you are, so you might be moved to behave accordingly," he concluded at a gallop.

Stunned, Jem and I looked at each other and then at Atticus who was very uncomfortable. I started to cry because this was not my father who thought these things. Aunt Alexandra told him to do this. I went to hug him and worried that all this behavin' was going to change things and I said so. Atticus told me not to worry.

I asked, "You really want us to do all that? I can't remember everything Finches are supposed to do…"

"I don't want you to remember it. Forget it."

He left Jem's room.

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Chapter 14

One day I was in town with Jem and I overheard people talking about Atticus and how he was defending Tom Robinson who had been accused of raping a white woman. I went home and asked Atticus what "rape" meant. He said it was carnal knowledge of a female by force and without consent. I didn't know what he meant by that!

I told him that Calpurnia didn't tell me what it meant when we went to church. I also told him that Cal said I could go to their house some time to visit her. Aunt Alexandra, who was sitting with us knitting said, "You may NOT!"

I got so mad! I yelled, "I didn't ask YOU!"

Atticus jumped out of his chair and said, "You apologize to your aunt."

I argued, "But I didn't ask her, I asked you."

Atticus said, "First, apologize to your aunt."

"I'm sorry, Aunty," I muttered.

Atticus said, "Now then. Let's get this clear: you do as Calpurnia tells you, you do as I tell you, and as long as your aunt's in this house, you will do as she tells you. Understand?"

I nodded and went to the bathroom. But I overheard Atticus and Aunt Alexandra talking after I left. Aunt Alexandra was saying that Atticus better do something about me. I wasn't acting like a lady at all and that Atticus should fire Calpurnia because they didn't need her anymore.

Atticus said, "Alexandra, Cal's not leaving this house until she wants to. You may think otherwise, but we really need her and she is a great person who feels like a member of our family. She's done a great job of helping me raise the children."

Later Jem told me to try not to annoy Aunty. I got so mad because he was trying to tell me what to do again. But Jem explained that we shouldn't do anything that would upset Atticus because he's got a lot on his mind. He's worried about the Tom Robinson case. Jem said, "Now I mean it , Scout, you bother Aunty and I'll – I'll spank you."

"You damn morphodite, I'll kill you!" I yelled. I was so mad that he was treating me like a little kid. We got in a fight and were punching and kicking. Finally Atticus came in and broke up the fight.

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Later that night I stepped on something near my bed and thought it was a snake. I went to get Jem to check. When he looked under there, he found DILL!!! He was dirty and hungry. He told this ridiculous story about how he had been tied up with chains in his basement by his new father and was kept alive by peas that a passing farmer would sneak in the window for him. Dill said he had pulled the chains from the wall and escaped. He wandered two miles and found a traveling animal show where he got a job washing a camel. He traveled all over Alabama with the show until his infallible sense of direction told him that he was right near Maycomb. So he walked to Jem and Scout's house.

Jem knew he was lying so Dill said that really he had taken $13 from his mother's purse and took a train from Meridian to somewhere near Maycomb. He had walked ten or eleven miles toward Maycomb and then rode the rest of the way, clinging to the back of a wagon. Jem said that Dill's folks and aunt would be worried about him, so they should tell Atticus.

When Atticus came in the room, Dill said, "Mr. Finch, don't tell Aunt Rachel, don't make me go back, PLEASE sir! I'll run off again --!

Atticus said, "Whoa, son. Nobody's about to make you go anywhere but to bed pretty soon. I'm just going over to tell Miss Rachel you're here and ask her if you could spend the night with us – you'd like that , wouldn't you? And for goodness sake put some of the county back where it belongs, you've got so much dirt on you!!"

Later that night I went to talk to Dill. I asked him why he ran away. He said that his parents weren't really mean to him, it's just that they weren't interested in him. They were always out, or if they were home they would be by themselves, not playing with him. Dill said, "They ain't mean. They buy me everything I want, but then they expect me to just go off by myself and play with the toys they bought. Oh, they ain't mean. They kiss you and hug you good night and good mornin' and good-bye and tell you they love you – Scout, let's get us a baby."

"Where?"

Dill said there was a man he had heard of who had a boat that he rowed across to a foggy island where all these babies were; you could order one –

I interrupted him by saying, "That's a lie. Aunty said God drops 'em down the chimney. At least that's what I think she said."

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"Well that ain't so," said Dill. "you get babies from each other. But there's this man, too – he has all these babies just waitin' to wake up, he breathes life into 'em."

As we were drifting off to sleelp I said, "Dill, why do you figure Boo Radley has never run away?"

Dill sighed a long sigh and said, "Maybe he doesn't have anywhere to run off to…"

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Chapter 15

It was decided that Dill would stay after much pleading. We had a week of peace together. I minded Aunty, Jem had outgrown the treehouse, and Dill had a plan of putting lemon drops leading from Boo's house out in order to make Boo come out of his house. There was a knock on the front door and it was Mr. Heck Tate. Here were some men outside as well and wanted Atticus to come outside. There were only two reasons why men in Maycomb stayed outside and that was because there was a death or to talk politics. Atticus went outside and we pressed our faces to the window to see and hear what was going on. We heard, "…movin' him to the county jail tomorrow," Mr. Tate was saying. "I don't look for any trouble, but I can't guarantee there won't be any…"

"Don't be foolish, Heck," Atticus said. "This is Maycomb."

"… said I was just uneasy."

There was more talk. Mr. Link Deas wanted to know if there was a chance that the trial could be held in another town for safety reasons. Mr. Deas is nervous about a crowd coming together when they're drunk and causing trouble for Tom. He continued, "—don't know why you touched it in the the first place. You've got everything to lose from this, Atticus. I mean everything."

"Do you really think so? … Link, that boy might go to the chair, but he's not going till the truth's told." Atticus's voice was even. "And you know what the truth is."

There was a murmur from the group of men. In the crowd there were merchants, in-town farmers, Dr. Reynolds, and Mr. Avery. Jem yelled out nervously, "Atticus, the telephone's ringing!" Even though it wasn't. Atticus told him to answer the phone and it made everyone in the group laugh.

When Atticus came in he went to his chair and picked up the paper to read. I walked home with Dill and returned in time to overhear a conversation between Atticus and Aunty. I found Jem in his bedroom. "Have they been at it?" I asked.

"Sort of. She won't let him alone about Tom Robinson. She almost said Atticus was disgracing the family. Scout… I'm scared."

"Scared 'a what?"

"Scared about Atticus. Somebody might hurt him."

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The next day was Sunday and Tom Robinson had just been moved to the Maycomb jail. The Sunday was quiet. Atticus went to his office, Aunt Alexandra went for a two hour nap, and Jem in his old age went to his room with a stack of football magazines. So Dill and I went out to the pasture to kick around the football.

After supper, Atticus did something that interested us. He came into the living room carrying a long extension cord. There was a light bulb at the end.

I'm going out for a while," he said. "You folks'll be in bed when I come back, so I'll say good night now."

He put on his hat and went out the back door. We noticed that he took the car. One of our father's peculiarities was that he liked to walk so taking the car was peculiar.

Later on I said good night to Aunty and while I was in my room I heard Jem rattling around in his room. I went in and asked him what he was doing.

I'm goin' downtown for a while." He was changing his pants.

"Why it's almost ten o'clock, Jem. I'm goin' with you. If you say no you're not, I'm goin' anyway, hear?"

I dressed quickly and Jem gave in with little grace. I said that Dill would probably want to come so we stopped at Dill's window at Miss Rachel's. "What's up?" Dill said.

"Jem's got the look-arounds."

"I've just got this feeling," Jem said, "just this feeling."

We looked at Atticus's office but it was dark inside. We decided to go up the street thinking he was visiting with Mr. Underwood, editor and writer of *The Maycomb Tribune.* He not only ran the newspaper, he lived about the office. On the way to the newspaper office we would have to go past the jail. There sitting in front of the jail was Atticus with the light and extension cord. I was going to run to him but Jem stopped me. He said that Atticus would not like us being here. We were turning to leave and saw four cars moving slowly in line stop in front of the jail. Atticus seemed to have been expecting them.

In ones and twos, men got out of the cars. Atticus remained where he was. The men hid from view.

"He in there, Mr. Finch?" a man said.

"He is," we heard Atticus answer, "and he's asleep. Don't wake him up."

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The men talked in near-whispers.

"You know what we want," another man said. "Get aside from the door, Mr. Finch."

"You can turn around and go home again, Walter," Atticus said pleasantly. "Heck Tate's around somewhere."

"The hell he is," said another man. "Heck's bunch's so deep in the woods they won't get out till mornin'."

"Indeed? Why do?"

"Called 'em off on a snipe hunt," was the succinct answer. "Didn't you think a' that, Mr. Finch?"

"Thought about it, but didn't believe it. Well then," my father's voice was still the same, "that changes things, doesn't it?"

"It do," another deep voice said. Its owner was a shadow.

"Do you really think so?"

I broke away from Jem and ran to Atticus as fast as I could. I pushed my way through the dark smelly bodies and burst into the circle of light.

"H'ey Atticus!"

A flash of plain fear was in his eyes and Jem and Dill wriggled into the light too. There was a smell of stale whiskey and pigpen. I looked around and did not notice these men. These men were not the same men as the other night. Atticus got up from his chair.

"Go home, Jem," he said. "Take Scout and Dill home."

The way Jem was standing he was not thinking of budging.

"Go home, I said."

Jem shook his head.

"Son, I said go home."

Jem shook his head agin.

"I'll send him home," a burly man said, and grabbed Jem roughly by the collar. He yanked Jem nearly off his feet.

"Don't you touch him!" I kicked the man swiftly. I was surprised to see him fall back in real pain. I intended to kick his shin, but aimed too high.

Atticus told me that will do and said that I shouldn't kick folks.

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"All right, Mr. Finch, get 'em outta here," someone growled. "You got fifteen seconds to get 'em outta here."

I looked around and saw that most of the men were dressed in overalls and denim shirts buttoned up to the collars even though it was a summer's night. I sought once more for a familiar face. I found one.

"Hey, Mr. Cunningham."

The man did not hear me, it seemed.

"Hey, Mr. Cuningham. How's your entailment getting' along?"

Mr. Walter Cunningham's legal affairs were well known to me since Atticus had once described them to me at length. The big man blinked at me and hooked his thumbs in his overall straps. He looked away. My friendly overture had fallen flat.

"Don't you remember me, Mrs. Cunningham? I'm Jean Louise Finch. You brought us some hickory nuts one time, remember?" I began to sense the futility one feels when unacknowledged by a chance acquaintance.

"I go to school with Walter," I began again. "He's your boy, ain't he? Ain't he sir?"

Mr. Cunningham was moved to a faint nod. He did know me after all.

"He's in my grade," I said, "and he does right well. He's a good boy," I added, "a real nice boy. We brought him home for dinner one time. Maybe he told you about me, I beat him up one time but he was real nice about it. Tell him hey for me, won't you?"

Atticus had always told me to be polite and to talk to people about things they were interested in. The men were all looking at me. I wondered what idiocy I had committed. I began to feel sweat gathering at the edges of my hair.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

Mr. Cunningham did a peculiar thing. He squatted down and took me by both shoulders.

"I'll tell him you said hey, little lady," he said.

Then he straightened up and waved a big paw. "Let's clear out," he called. "Let's get going, boys."

The men shuffled back into their cars and were gone.

I turned to Atticus. "Can we go home now?" He nodded.

"Mr. Finch? They gone?"

"They've gone," he said. "Get some sleep, Tom. They won't bother you anymore."

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From a different direction, another voice cut crisply through the night: "You're damn tootin' they won't. Had you covered all the time, Atticus."

Mr. Underwood and a double-barrelled shotgun were leaning out the window. We started to walk home. Atticus and Jem were ahead of me and Dill. I thought Atticus would give Jem hell for not going home, but I was wrong. Atticus reached out and massaged Jem's hair, his one gesture of affection.

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Chapter 16

Atticus drove us home and killed the engine as we approached the house so we wouldn't wake Aunty. We went to our rooms without a word. I was very tired. I was drifting to sleep when the events of the night hit me and I started crying. Jem came to me and he was awfully nice to me.

In the morning, Aunty, who knew about what happened last night, said that children who slipped out at night were a disgrace to the family. Aunty also said that Mr. Underwood was there the whole time and nothing bad would have happened.

"You know, it's a funny thing about Braxton (Mr. Underwood)," said Atticus. "He despises Negroes, won't have one near him."

Aunty took offense to Atticus saying this comment about Mr. Underwood in front of Calpurnia. "Don't talk like that in front of them."

"Talk like what in front of whom?" he asked.

"Like that in front of Calpurnia. You said Braxton Underwood despises Negroes right in front of her."

"Well, I'm sure Cal knows it. Everybody in Maycomb knows it. Anything fit to say at the table's fine to say in front of Calpurnia. She knows what she means to this family."

"I don't think it's a good habit, Atticus. It encourages them. You know how they talk among themselves. Everything that happens in this town's out to the Quarters before sundown."

"I don't know of any law that says they can't talk. Maybe if we didn't give them so much to talk about they'd be quiet."

I was playing with my spoon and asked, "I thought Mr. Cunningham was a friend of ours. You told me a long time ago he was."

"He still is."

"But last night he wanted to hurt you."

"Mr. Cunningham's basically a good man," he said. "He just has his blind spots along with the rest of us."

Jem spoke. "Don't call that a blind spot. He'd a' killed you last night when he first went there."

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"He might have hurt me a little," Atticus conceded, "but son, you'll understand folks a little better when you're older. A mob's always made up of people, no matter what. Mr. Cunningham was part of a mob last night, but he was still a man. Every mob in every little Southern town is always made up of people, you know – doesn't say much for them, does it?"

"I'll say not," said Jem.

"So it took an eight-year-old child to bring 'em to their senses, didn't it?" said Atticus. "That proves something --- that a gang of wild animals can be stopped, simply because they're still human. Hmph, maybe we need a police force of children… **you children last night made Walter Cunningham stand in my shoes for a minute. That was enough."**

Dill came by and said that it's all over town how we held off a hundred people with our bare hands. Aunt Alexandra said it was nowhere near a hundred people and that it was just a bunch of drunk and disorderly men.

Miss Maudie was out in her yard. Jem yelled over, "You goin' to court this morning?"

"I am not," she said. "I have no business with the court this morning."

"Aren't you goin' down to watch?" asked Dill.

"I am not. It's morbid, watching a poor devil on trial for his life. Look at all those folks, it's like a Roman carnival."

The courthouse square was covered with picnic parties sitting on newspapers, washing down biscuits and syrup with warm milk from fruit jars.

In the far corner of the square, the Negroes sat quietly in the sun, dining on sardines, crackers, and the more vivid flavors of Nehi Cola. Mr. Dophus Raymond sat with them.

"Jem," said Dill. "He's drinkin' out of a sack."

Mr. Dolphus Raymond was drinking something out of a paper sack with two straws.

Jem giggled, "He's got a Co-Cola bottle full of whiskey in there. That's son's not to upset the ladies. You'll see him sip it all afternoon, he'll step out for a while and fill it back up."

Why's he sittin' with the colored folks?"

"Always does. He likes 'em better'n he likes us, I reckon. Lives by himself way down near the county line. He's got a colored woman and all sorts of mixed chillun. Show you some of 'em if we see 'em."

"He doesn't look like trash," said Dill.

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"He's not, he owns all one side of the riverbank down there, and he's from a real old family to boot."

"Then why does he do like that?"

"That's just his way," said Jem. "They say he never got over his weddin'. He was supposed to marry one of the – the Spencer ladies, I think. They were gonna have a huge weddin', but they didn't – after the rehearsal the bride went upstairs and blew her head off. Shotgun. She pulled the trigger with her toes."

"Did they ever know why?"

"No," said Jem. "Nobody ever knew quite why but Mr. Dolphus. They said it was because she found out about his colored woman, he reckoned he could keep her and get married too. He's been sorta drunk ever since. You know, thought, he's real good to those chillun—"

"Jem," I asked. "What's a mixed child?"

"Half white, half colored. You've seen 'em, Scout. You know that red kinky-headed one that delivers for the drugstore. He's half white. They're real sad."

"Sad, how come?"

"They don't belong anywhere. Colored folks won't have 'em because they're half white; white folks won't have 'em because they're colored, so they're just in-between, don't belong anywhere. But Mr. Dolphus, now, they say he's shipped two of his up North. They don't mind 'em up North. Yonder's one of 'em."

Jem told us, "Around here once you have a drop of Negro blood, that makes you all black."

"Let's go in," said Dill.

"Naw, we better wait till they get in. Atticus might not like it if he sees us," said Jem.

We knew there would be a crowd but we had not bargained for the multitudes of people. We overheard conversations about my father.

"…thinks he knows what he's doing," one said.

"Ohh now, I wouldn't say that," another said.

"Lemme tell you somethin' now, Billy," a third said, "you know the court appointed him to defend this nigger."

"Yeah, but Atticus aims to defend him. That's what I don't like about it."

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The Negroes waited for the white people to go in and then they climbed to the balcony where they were to sit. We couldn't find a seat anywhere and were going to have to stand by the wall. We ran into Reverend Sykes. He edged his way and told us that there was not a seat anywhere downstairs.

"Do you all reckon it'll be all right if you all come to the balcony with me?"

"Gosh, yes, " said Jem. Happily we sped ahead of Reverend Sykes to the staircase. Four Negroes rose and gave us their front-row seats.

The jury sat on the left, under long windows. One or two of the jury looked vaguely like dressed up Cunninghams. Atticus and Tom Robinson sat at tables with their backs to us and there was the prosecutor at the other table. Judge Taylor was at the bench.

Judge Taylor looked like he was sleepy but knew the law and actually ran his courtroom with a firm grip. He had one peculiar habit. He allowed smoking in his courtroom but didn't smoke himself. However, he did, at times, put a long dry cigar into his mouth and munch it up slowly. Bit by bit the dead cigar would disappear, to reappear some hours later as a flat slick mess, its essence extracted and mingled with Judge Taylor's digestive juices. I once asked Atticus how Mrs. Taylor stood to kiss him, but Atticus said they didn't kiss much. By the time we took our seats in the balcony, Sheriff Heck Tate was already taking his seat on the witness stand.

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Chapter 17

I asked if those were the Ewells sitting down there, but Jem told me to hush since Heck Tate was testifying.

I saw that Heck Tate had worn a normal suit and looked like every other man.

The solicitor was named Mr. Gilmer and he was not well known to us. He was from Abbottsville and we only saw him when there was a trial. He was anywhere between forty and sixty. We knew that he had a slight cast in one of his eyes, which he used to his advantage. He seemed to be looking at a person when he was actually doing notheing of the kind, thus he was hell on juries and witnesses. They thought they were under close scrutiny so they paid attention but so did the witnesses.

Mr. Gilmer was asking questions about what happened on the night he was called to the Ewell's house.

Mr. Tate said, "I was fetched by Bob—Mr. Bob Ewell yonder, one night –"

"What night, sir?"

Mr. Tate said, "It was the night of November twenty-first. I was just leaving my office to go home when Bob – Mr. Ewell came in, very excited he was, and said to get out to his house quick, some nigger'd raped his girl."

"Did you go?"

"Certainly. Got in the car and went out as fast as I could."

"And what did you find?"

"Found her lying on the floor in the middle of the front room, one on the right as you go in. She was pretty well beat up, but I heaved her to her feet and she washed her face in a bucket in the corner and said she was all right. I asked her who hurt her and she said it was Tom Robinson –"

Judge Taylor thought that Atticus was going to object but he didn't.

"-- asked her if he beat her like that, she said yes he head. Asked her if he took advantage of her and she said yes, he did. So I went down to Robinson's house and brought him back. She identified him as the one, so I took him in. That's all there was to it."

"Thank you," said Mr. Gilmer.

Judge Taylor asked if Atticus had any questions and he did.

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"Did you call a doctor, Sheriff? Did anybody call a doctor?" asked Atticus.

"No, sir," said Mr. Tate.

"Why not?" There was an edge to Atticus's voice.

"Well I can tell you why I didn't. It wasn't necessary, Mr. Finch. She was mighty banged up. Something sho' happened, it was obvious."

"But you didn't call a doctor? While you were there did anyone send for one, fetch one, carry her to one?"

"No sir –"

Judge Taylor told Atticus that he had already answered the questions and to move on. Atticus wanted to make sure.

"Sheriff," Atticus was saying, "you say she was mighty banged up. In what way?"

"Well –"

"Just describe the injuries, Heck."

"Well, she was beaten around the head. There was already bruises comin' on her arms, and it happened about thirty minutes before—"

"How do you know?"

Mr. Tate grinned. "Sorry, that's what they said. Anyway, she was pretty bruised up when I got there, and she had a black eye comin'."

"Which eye?"

"Let's see," he said softly, then he looked at Atticus as if he considered the question childish. "Can't you remember?" Atticus asked.

Mr.. Tate pointed to an invisible person five inches in front of him and said, "Her left."

"Wait a minute, Sheriff," said Atticus. "Was it her left facing you or her left looking the same way you were?"

Mr. Tate said, "Oh yes, that'd make it her right. It was her right eye, Mr. Finch. I remember now, she was bunged up on that side of her face…"

Mr. Tate blinked as if something had suddenly been made clear to him. He turned and looked at Tom Robinson and Tom raised his head also.

Something became clear to Atticus as well and he asked the sheriff to repeat what he just said.

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"It was her right eye, I said."

Attticus looked up at Mr. Tate. Which side again, Heck?"

"The right side, Mr. Finch, but she had more bruises – you wanta hear about 'em?"

"Yes, what were her other injuries?"

"… her arms were bruised, and she showed me her neck. There were definite finger marks on her gullet—"

"All around her throat? At the back of her neck?"

"I'd say they were all around Mr. Finch."

"You would?"

"Yes sir, she had a small throat, anybody could'a reached around it with—"

"Just answer the question yes or no please, Sheriff,", said Atticus dryly, and Mr. Tate fell silent.

They were all finished with Mr. Tate as a witness and he stepped down from the witness stand.

Everyone shuffled around a bit, whispering to each other. Dill asked Reverend Sykes what that was all about, but he didn't know. So far things were utterly dull. There were no arguments from opposing counsel and there was no drama. All were relaxed except Jem.

"Robert E. Lee Ewell!"

In answer to the clerk's booming voice, a man rose and strutted to the stand, the back of his neck reddening at the sound of his name. When he turned around to take the stand we say that he had wispy hair that stood up from his forehead, a nose that was thin and pointed, and no chin to speak of.

Every town had families like the Ewells. They lived off of welfare, no truant officer could get the children in school, and no health official could free them from diseases that came from their filthy surroundings.

The Ewells lived behind the town garbage dump in what was once a Negro cabin. It's a square shaped cabin with four small rooms. Its windows were just open spaces in the walls that were covered with greasy cheesecloth in the summer to keep out the varmints. Their yard was dirty and contained the remains of a Model-T Ford, a discarded dentist's chair, an ancient icebox, plus lesser items: old shoes, worn-out table radios, picture frames, and fruit jars.

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One corner of the yard, though, bewildered Maycomb. Against the fence, in a line, were six chipped-enamel slop jars holding brilliant red geraniums, cared for as tenderly as if they belonged to Miss Maudie Atkinson. People said they were Mayella Ewell's.

Nobody was quite sure how many children were on the place. Some people thought there were six, others said nine. There were always several dirty faced ones at the windows when anyone passed.

"Mr. Robert Ewelll?" asked Mr. Gilmer.

"That's m'name, Cap'n," said the witness.

Mr. Gilmer's back stiffened. "Are you the father of Mayelle Ewell?" was the next question.

"Well, if I ain't I can't do nothing about it now, her ma's dead," was the answer.

Judge Taylor spoke up in a way that made all the laughter in the courtroom die down, "Are you the Father of Mayella Ewell?"

"Yes sir," Mr. Ewell said meekly.

Judge Taylor spoke again and informed Mr. Ewell that he will no longer take any obscene speculations on any subject from anybody in this courtroom.

Mr. Gilmer continued, "Thank you, sir. Mr. Ewell, would you tell us in your own words what happened on the evening of November 21st, please?"

"Well, the night of November twenty-one I was comin' in from the woods with a load o' kindlin' and just as I got to the fence I heard Mayella screamin' like a stuck hog inside the house--"

"What time was it, Mr. Ewell?"

"Just 'fore sundown. Well, I was sayin' Mayella was screamin' fit to beat Jesus—" another glance from the bench silenced Mr. Ewell.

"Yes? She was screaming?" said Mr. Gilmer.

"Well, Mayella was raisin' this holy racket so I dropped m'load and run as fast as I could but I run into th' fence, but when I got distangled I run up to th' window and I seen—" Mr. Ewell's face grew scarlet. He stood up and pointed his finger at Tom Robinson. "I seen that black n****r yonder ruttin' on my Mayella!"

Judge Taylor used his gavel for five full minutes before the courtroom came to order. Reverend Sykes leaned across Dill and told Jem that he ought to take me home.

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Jem turned his head. "Scout, go home. Dill, you'n Scout go home."

"You gotta make me first," I said, remembering Atticus's promise.

"I think it's okay, Reverend, she doesn't understand it."

I was offended. "I most certainly do, I c'n understand anything you can."

Reverend Sykes got nervous. "Mr. Finch know you all are here? This ain't fit for Miss Jean Louise or you boys either."

Jem shook his head. "He can't see us this far away. It's alright, Reverend."

Jem won. He got us to stay.

Judge Taylor finally got the courtroom back under control and Bob Ewell looked mighty pleased at what he had caused. Judge Taylor threatened to clear all the spectators out of the courtroom if there were more outbursts.

"Proceed Mr. Gilmer." Judge Taylor stated.

"Mr. Ewell, did you see the defendant having sexual intercourse with your daughter?"

"Yes, I did."

"You say you were at the window?" asked Mr. Gilmer.

"Yes, sir."

"How far is it from the ground?"

"'Bout three foot."

"Did you have a clear view?"

"Yes, sir."

"How did the room look?"

"Well, it was all slung about, like there was a fight."

"What did you do when you saw the defendant?"

"Well, I run around the house to get in, but he ran out the front door just ahead of me. I sawed who he was, all right. I was too distracted about Mayella to run after 'im. I run in the house and she was lyin' on the floor squallin'—"

"Then what did you do?"

"Why I run for Tate quick as I could. I knowed who it was, all right, lived down yonder in that nigger-nest, passed the house every day. Jedge, I've asked this county for fifteen years to clean out that nest down yonder, they're dangerous to live around 'sides devaluin' my property—"

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"Thank you, Mr. Ewell," said Mr. Gilmer hurriedly.

Bob Ewell made a hasty retreat form the witness stand, but Atticus had also risen to ask a few questions. Mr. Ewell backed up to the witness stand and the crowd laughed at him.

"Mr. Ewell," Atticus began, "folks were doing a lot of running that night. Let's see, you say you ran to the house, you ran to the window, you ran inside, you ran to Mayella, you ran for Mr. Tate. Did you, during all this running, run for a doctor?"

"Wadn't no need to. I seen what happened."

"But there's one thing I don't understand," said Atticus. "Weren't you concerned with Mayella's condition?"

"I most positively was," said Mr. Ewell. "I seen who done it."

"No, I mean her physical condition. Did you not think the nature of her injuries warranted immediate medical attention?"

"What?"

"Didn't you think she should have had a doctor, immediately?"

Mr. Ewell in all of his life would never have thought to call on a doctor. It would have cost him five dollars.

Atticus asked him if he heard Mr. Heck Tate's testimony and he said that he did.

Atticus asked, "Do you agree with his description of Mayella's injuries?"

"How's that?"

"Mr. Tate testified that her right eye was blackened, that she was beaten around the –"

"Oh yeah," said the witness. "I hold with everything Tate said."

"You do? I just want to make sure… 'Which eye her left? Oh yes that'd make it her right, it was her right eye…' "

"I holds with Tate. Her eye was blacked and she was mighty beat up." Mr. Ewell answered.

"Mr. Ewell, can you read and write?"

"I most positively can."

"Will you write your name and show us?"

"I most positively will. How do you think I sign my relief checks?"

Mr. Ewell wrote his name.

"What's so interestin'?" he asked.

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"You're left-handed, Mr. Ewell," said Judge Taylor. Mr. Ewell got angry and didn't see what being left-handed had to do with it.

Mr. Gilmer asked him one more question. "About your writing with your left hand… are you ambidextrous, Mr. Ewell?"

"I most positively am not, I can use one hand good as the other. One hand good as the other," he added, glaring at the defense table.

Jem got excited, "We've got him."

I didn't think so. I knew Atticus was trying to show that since Mayella was mostly beaten on her right side, it had to be a left-handed person who did it. But Tom Robinson could easily be left-handed too.

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Chapter 18

The booming voice for the clerk range out, “Mayella Violet Ewell!”

A young girl walked to the witness stand and raised her hand to be sworn in as a witness. She was a thick-bodied girl who was accustomed to strenuous labor.

It was also clear that Mayella tried to keep clean and I was reminded of the red geraniums in the Ewell yard.

Mr. Gilmer asked Mayella to tell the jury in her own words what happened on the evening of November twenty-first of last year.

Mayella sat silently.

“Where were you at dusk on that evening” began Mr. Gilmer patiently.

“On the porch.”

“Which porch?”

“Ain’t but one, the front porch.”

“What were you doing on the porch?”

“Nothin’.”

Judge Taylor said, “Just tell us what happened. You can do that, can’t you?”

Mayella stared at him and then burst into tears. Judge Taylor let her cry for a bit and then said, “That’s enough now. Don’t be ‘fraid of anybody here, as long as you tell the truth. All this is strange to you, I know, but you’ve nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to fear. What are you scared of?”

Mayella said something behind her hands and the judge had to ask her to repeat.

“Him,” she sobbed, pointing to Atticus.

“Mr. Finch?”

She nodded saying, “Don’t want him doin’ me like he done Papa, tryin’ to make him out lefthanded…”

Judge Taylor looked at a loss as to what to. He asked, “How old are you?

“Nineteen-and-a-half,” Mayella said.

The judge spoke in soothing tones. “Mr. Finch has no idea of scaring you: he growled, “and if he did, I’m here to stop him. That’s one thing I’m sitting up here for. Now you’re a big

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girl, so you just sit up straight and tell the – tell us what happened to you. You can do that, can't you?

Up in the balcony, I wondered if she had good sense.

Mayella answered Mr. Gilmer's question. "Well sir, I was on the porch and – an dhe came along and, you see, there was this old chiffarobe in the yard Papa'd brought to chop up for kindlin' – Papa told me to do it while he was off in the woods but I wadn't feelin' strong enough then, so he came by –"

"Who is 'he'?"

Mayella pointed to Tom Robinson.

"Then what happened?"

"I said, 'Come here, nigger, and bust up this chiffarobe for me.' I gotta nickel and I turned around and 'fore I knew it he was on me. Just run up behind me, he did. He got me round the neck cussin' me an' sayin' dirt – I fought n' hollered, but he had me round the neck. He hit me agin an' agin –"

Mr. Gilmer waited for Mayella to get ahold of herself. She then waited for Mr. Gilmer to ask another question and when he didn't she said, "He chunked me on the floor an' choked me n' took advantage of me."

"Did you scream?" asked Mr. Gilmer "Did you scream and fight back?"

"Reckon I did, hollered for all I was worth, kicked and hollered loud as I could."

"Then what happened?"

"I don't remember too good, but next thing I knew Papa was in the room a'standing over me hollerin', 'Who done it, who done it?' Then I sorta fainted an' the next thing I knew Mr. Tate was pullin' me up offa the floor and leadin' me to the water bucket."

"You say you fought him off as hard as you could? Fought him tooth and nail?" asked Mr. Gilmer

"I positively did," Mayella echoed her father.

"You are positive that he took full advantage of you?"

Mayella's face scrunched up and I thought she was going to cry again but didn't and said, "He done what he was after."

Mr. Gilmer was finished and Atticus got up to ask some questions of Mayella.

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"Miss Mayella," he said, smiling. "I won't try to scare you for a while, not yet. Let's just get acquainted. How old are you?"

"Said I was nineteen, said it to the judge yonder."

"So you did, so you did, ma'am. You'll have to bear with me, Miss Mayella, I'm getting along and can't remember as well as I used to. I might ask you a thing you've already said before, but you'll give me an answer, won't you? Good."

She didn't look like Atticus had gotten her full cooperation. She was looking at him like she was mad as hell.

"Won't answer a word you say long as you keep on mockin' me," she said.

"Ma'am?" asked Atticus, startled.

"Long's you keep on makin' fun o' me."

Judge Taylor said, "Mr. Finch is not making fun of you. What's the matter with you?"

Mayella said to the judge, "Long's he keeps on callin' me ma'am and sayin' Miss Mayella. I don't hafta take his sass, I ain't called upon to take it."

The judge tried to explain. "That's just Mr. Finch's way. We've done business in court for years, and Mr. Finch is always courteous to everybody. He's not trying to mock you, he's trying to be polite. That's just his way. Atticus, let's get on with these proceedings, and let the record show that the witness has not been sassed, her views to the contrary."

I wondered if anybody had ever called Mayella "ma'am" or "Miss Mayella"; probably not. She probably took offense to routine courtesy. I wondered what her life had been like.

"You say you're nineteen," Atticus resumed. "How many sisters and brothers have you?"

"Seb'm" she said.

"You the eldest? The oldest?"

"Yes."

"How long has your mother been dead?"

"Don't know – long time."

"Did you ever go to school?"

"Read n' write good as Papa yonder."

"How long did you go to school?"

"Two year… three year… dunno."

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These questions were to give the jury a picture of the Ewell's home life, I realized. The jury learned that the welfare check was not enough to feed the family, Papa went off into the swamp for days and came home sick, you could make shoes out of strips of tires and that the family carries water in buckets from a spring to their house.

"Miss Mayella," said Atticus, "a nineteen-year-old girl like you must have friends. Who are your friends?"

The witness looked puzzled. "Friends?"

"Yes, don't you know anyone near your age, or older or younger? Boys and girls? Just ordinary friends?"

"You makin' fun o' me agin, Mr. Finch?"

"Do you love your father, Miss Mayella?" was his next question.

"Love him, whatcha mean?"

"I mean, is he good to you, is he easy to get along with?"

"He does tollable, 'cept when –"

"Except when?"

Mayella looked at her father and he sat up straight and waited for her to answer.

"Except when nothin'," said Mayella. "I said he does tollable."

Mr. Ewell leaned back in his chair again.

"Except when he's drinking?" asked Atticus so gently that Mayella nodded. "Does he ever go after you?"

"How do you mean?"

"When he's – riled, has he ever beaten you?"

Mayella looked at the court reporter. Judge Taylor told her to answer the question.

"My paw's never touched a hair o' my head in my life," she declared firmly. "He never touched me."

"We've had a good visit, Miss Mayella, and now I guess we'd better get to the case. You say you asked Tom Robinson to come chop up a – what was it?"

"A chiffarobe, a old dresser full of drawers on one side."

"Was Tom Robinson well known to you?"

"Whaddya mean?"

"I mean did you know who he was, where he lived?"

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Mayella nodded. "I knowed who he was, he passed the house every day."

"Was this the first time you asked him to come inside the fence?"

She didn't answer the questions right away so Atticus started to ask it again, but she answered, "Yes, it was."

"Didn't you ever ask him to come inside the fence before?"

She was prepared now for this question. "I did not, I certainly did not."

"One did not's enough," said Atticus serenely. "You never asked him to do odd jobs for you before?"

"I mighta," conceded Mayella. "There was several n****s around."

"Can you remember any other occasions?"

"No."

"All right, now to what happened. You said Tom Robinson was behind you in the room when you turned around, that right?"

"Yes."

"You said he 'got you around the neck cussin and saying dirt' – is that right?"

"'t's right."

"You say 'he caught me and choked me and took advantage of me' – is that right?"

"That's what I said"

"Do you remember him beating you about the face?"

Mayella was silent. She seemed to be trying to get something clear to herself.

"It's an easy question, Miss Mayella, so I'll try again. Do you remember him beating you about the face?" Atticus was speaking in a professional voice. "Do you remember him beating you about the face?"

"No, I don't recollect if he hit me. I mean, yes I do, he hit me."

"Was your last sentence your answer?"

"Huh? Yes, he hit – I just don't remember, I just don't remember… it all happened so quick."

Judge Taylor told her not to cry again but Atticus said to let her cry all she wants. They've all the time in the world.

"I'll answer any question you got --- get me up here an' mock me, will you? I'll answer any question you got—"

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"That's fine," said Atticus. "There're only a few more. Miss Mayella, not to be tedious, you've testified that the defendant hit you, grabbed you around the neck, choked, you, and took advantage of you. I want you to be sure you have the right man. Will you identify the man who raped you?"

"I will, that's him right yonder."

Atticus turned to Tom and said, "Tom, stand up. Let Miss Mayella have a good long look at you. Is this the man, Miss Mayella?"

Tom Robinson stood up. Strong powerful shoulder muscles showed under his thin shirt. He looked off balance though. His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far away as the balcony I could see that it was no use to him.

"Scout," breathed Jem. "Scout look! Reverend, he's crippled!"

Reverend Sykes explained to us that Tom got his arm caught in Mr. Dolphus Raymond's cotton gin when he was a boy. He almost bled to death and the machine had tore the muscles loose from his bones.

"Is this the man who raped you?" asked Atticus.

"It most certainly is."

"How?"

Mayella was raging. "I don't know how he done it, but he done it – I said it all happened so fast I—"

"Now let's consider this calmly—" began Atticus. "…Miss Mayella, you've testified that the defendant choked and beat you – you didn't say that he sneaked up behind you and knocked you out cold, but you turned around and there he was – do you wish to reconsider any of your testimony?"

"You want me to say something that didn't happen?"

"No ma'am, I want you to say something that did happen. Tell us once more, please, what happened?"

"I told'ja what happened."

"You testified that you turned around and there he was. He choked you then?"

"Yes."

"Then he released your throat and hit you?"

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"I said he did."

"He blacked your left eye with his right fist?"

"I ducked and it – it glanced, that's what it did. I ducked and it glanced off." Mayella had finally seen the light.

"You're becoming suddenly clear on this point. A while ago you couldn't remember too well, could you?"

"I said he hit me."

"All right. He choked you, he hit you, then he raped you, that right?"

"It most certainly is."

"You're a strong girl, what were you doing all the time, just standing there?"

"I told'ja I hollered n' kicked n' fought—"

"All right, why didn't you run?"

"I tried…"

"Tried to? What kept you from it?"

"I—he slung me down. That's what he did, he slung me down n' got on top of me."

"You were screaming all this time?"

"I certainly was."

"Then why didn't the other children hear you? Where were they? At the dump? Where were they?"

No answer.

"Why didn't your screams make them come running? The dump's closer than the woods, isn't it?"

No answer.

"Or didn't you scream until you saw your father in the window? You didn't think to scream until then, did you?"

No answer.

"Did you scream first at your father instead of at Tom Robinson? Was that it?

No answer.

"Who beat you up? Tom Robinson or your father?"

No answer.

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"What did your father see in the window, the crime of rape or the best defense to it? Why don't you tell the truth child, didn't Bob Ewell beat you up?"

Suddenly Mayella became articulate. "I got somethin' to say," she said.

"Do you want to tell us what happened?" Atticus said compassionately.

"I got somethin' to say an' then I ain't gonna say no more. That n****r yonder took advantage of me an' if you fine fancy gentlemen don't wanta do nothin' about it then you're all yellow stinkin' cowards, stinkin' cowards, the lot of you. Your fancy airs don't come to nothin' – your ma'amin' and Miss Mayellerin' don't come to nothin', Mr. Finch –"

Then she burst into real tears. She answered no more questions. I guess if she hadn't been so poor and ignorant, Judge Taylor would have put her in jail for not answering anymore questions.

Mr. Gilmer told the judge that the state was through with their case. Judge Taylor said that everyone could take a ten minute break.

Atticus and Mr. Gilmer met with the judge behind closed doors. We all got up and stretched. The temperature was about 90 degrees and we were all very hot.

Mr. Underwood was getting information for the newspaper. He looked around and saw us up in the balcony.

"Jem," I said, "Mr. Underwood's seen us."

"That's okay. He won't tell Atticus, he'll just put it on the social side of the Tribune."

Judge Taylor returned and climbed into this chair. "It's gettin' on to four," he said, "Shall we try to wind up this afternoon? How 'bout it, Atticus?"

"I think we can," said Atticus.

"How many witnesses you got?"

"One."

"Well, call him."

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Chapter 19

Thomas Robinson lifted his bad arm to raise it on the Bible to give his oath. It slipped off and the judge growled, "That'll do, Tom."

Tom was twenty-five years old and he was married with three children. We also found out that he had once been in trouble with the law. He once received thirty days in jail for disorderly conduct.

"It must have been disorderly," said Atticus. "What did it consist of?"

"Got in a fight with another man, he tried to cut me."

"Did he succeed?"

"Yes, suh, a little, not enough to hurt. You see, I—" Tom moved his left shoulder.

"Yes," said Atticus. "You were both convicted?"

"Yes suh, I had to serve 'cause I couldn't pay the fine. Other fellow paid his 'n."

"Were you acquainted with Mayella Violet Ewell?" asked Atticus.

"Yes suh, I had to pass her place goin' to and from the field every day."

"Whose field?"

"I picks for Mr. Link Deas."

"Were you picking cotton in November?"

"No suh, I works in his yard fall an' wintertime. I works pretty steady for him all year round, he's got a lot of pecan trees 'n things."

"You say you had to pass the Ewell place to get to and from work. Is there any other way to go?"

"No, suh, none's that I know of."

"Tom, did she ever speak to you?"

"Why, yes suh, I'd tip m' hat when I'd go by, and one day she asked me to come inside the fence and bust up a chiffarobe for her."

"When did she ask you to chop up the—the chiffarobe?"

"Mr. Finch, it was way last spring. I remember it because it was choppin' time and I had my hoe with me. I said I didn't have nothin' but this hoe, but she said she had a hatchet. She give me the hatchet and I broke up the chiffarobe. She said, 'I reckon I'll hafta give you a

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nickel, won't I?' an' I said, 'No ma'am there ain't no charge.' Then I went home. Mr. Finch, that was way last spring, way over a year ago."

"Did you ever go on the place again?"

"Yes, suh."

"When?"

"Well, I went lots of times."

There was murmuring in the courtroom but it died down quickly.

"Under what circumstances?"

"Please, suh?"

"Why did you go inside the fence lots of times?"

"She'd call me in, suh. Seemed like every time I passed by yonder she'd have some little somethin' for me to do—choppin', kindlin', totin' water for her. She watered them red flowers every day—"

"Were you paid for your services?"

"No suh, not after she offered me a nickel the first time. I was glad to do it, Mr. Ewell didn't seem to help her none, and neither did the chillun, and I knowed she didn't have no nickels to spare."

"Where were the other children?"

"They was always around, all over the place. They'd watch me work, some of 'em'd set in the window."

"Would Miss Mayella talk to you?"

"Yes sir, she talked to me."

It came to me as Tom was testifying that Mayella must have been the loneliest person in the world. She was even lonelier than Boo Radley who had not been out of the house in twenty-five years. She didn't understand when Atticus asked her if she had any friends. She thought he was making fun of her. She couldn't be like Mr. Dolphus Raymond because she didn't have a lot of money for people to overlook the fact that he lived with Negroes. Tom Robinson was probably the only person who was ever decent to her. But she said he took advantage of her and when she looked at him in court, she looked down upon him like he was dirt beneath her feet.

"Did you ever," Atticus said, "at any time, go on the Ewell property—did you ever set foot on the Ewell property without an express invitation from one of them?"

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"No suh, Mr. Finch, I never did. I wouldn't do that, suh."

"Tom, what happened to you on the evening of November twenty-first of last year?"

Everyone leaned forward and drew in their breath.

"Mr. Finch," he said, "I was goin' home as usual that evenin', an' when I passed the Ewell place Miss Mayella were on the porch, like she said she were. It seemed real quiet like, an' I didn't quite know why. I was studyin' why, just passin' by, when she waves for me to come there and help her a minute. Well, I went inside the fence an' looked around for some kindlin' to work on, but I didn't seen none, and she says, "Naw, I got something' for you to do in the house. Th' old door's off its hinges an' fall's comin' on pretty fast.' I said, 'You got a screwdriver, Miss Mayella?' She said she sho' had. Well, I went up the steps an' she motioned me to come inside, and I went in the front room an' looked at the door. I said, 'Miss Mayella, the door look all right. Then she shet the door in my face. Mr. Finch, I was wonderin' why it was so quiet like, an' it come to me that there weren't a chile on the place, not a one of 'em, and I said 'Miss Mayella, where the chillun?' I say, 'Where the chillun?" he continued, "an' she says—she was laughin', sort of – she says they all gone to town to get ice creams. She says, 'took me a slap year to save seb'm nickels, but I done it. They all gone to town.'"

Tom felt uncomfortable. "What did you say then, Tom?" asked Atticus.

"I said somethin' like, why Miss Mayella, that's right smart o' you to treat 'em. An' she said, 'You think so?' I don't think she understood what I was thinkin'—I meant it was smart of her to save like that, an' nice of her to treat 'em."

"I understand you, Tom. Go on," said Atticus.

"Well, I said I best be goin', I couldn't do nothin' for her, an' she says oh yes I could , an' I ask her what, and she says to just step on that chair yonder an' git that box down from the top of the chiffarobe."

"Not the same chiffarobe you busted up?" asked Atticus.

"Naw suh, another one. Most as tall as the room. So I done what she told me, an' I was just reachin' when the next thing I knows she—she'd grabbed me round the legs, grabbed me round th' legs, Mr. Finch. She scared me so bad I hopped down an' turned the chair over – that was the only thing, only furniture, 'sturbed in that room, Mr. Finch, when I left it. I swear 'fore God."

"What happened after you turned the chair over?"

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Tom Robinson came to a dead stop. He glanced at Atticus, then to the jury, and Mr. Underwood sitting across the room.

"Tom you're sworn to tell the whole truth. Will you tell it?"

Tom ran his hand nervously over his mouth.

"What happened after that?"

"Answer the question," said Judge Taylor.

"Mr. Finch, I got down offa that chair an' turned around an' she sorta jumped on me."

"Jumped on you? Violently?"

"No suh, she—she hugged. Me. She hugged me round the waist."

The crowed got loud again and Judge Taylor used his gavel to get order.

"Then what did she do?"

"She reached up an' kissed me 'side of th' face. She says she never kissed a grown man before an' she might as well kiss a nigger. She says what her papa do to her don't count. She says, 'Kiss me back, nigger.' I say, 'Miss Mayella lemme outta here' an' tried to run but she got her back to the door an' I'da had to push her. I didn't wanta harm her, Mr. Finch, an' I say lemme pass, but just when I say it Mr. Ewell yonder hollered through th' window."

"What did he say?"

Tom Robinson swallowed again and his eyes widened. "Somethin' not fittin' to say—not fittin' for these folks 'n chillun to hear—"

"What did he say, Tom? You must tell the jury what he said."

Tom Robinson shut his eyes tight. "He says you goddamn whore, I'll kill ya."

"Then what happened?"

"Mr. Finch, I was runnin' so fast I didn't know what happened."

"Tom, did you rape Mayella Ewell?"

"I did not, suh."

"Did you harm her in any way?"

"I did not, suh."

"Did you resist her advances?"

"Mr. Finch, I tried. I tried to 'thout bein' ugly to her. I didn't wanta be ugly, I didn't wanta push her or nothin'."

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It occurred to me that Tom Robinson's manners were as good as Atticus's in their own way. I did not understand Tom's situation: he would not have dared strike a white woman under any circumstances and expect to live long, so he took the first opportunity to run which made him look like he was guilty.

"Tom, go back once more to Mr. Ewell," said Atticus. "Did he say anything to you?"

"Not anything, suh. He mighta said somethin', but I weren't there—"

"That'll do," Atticus cut in sharply. "What you did hear, who was he talking to?"

"Mr. Finch, he were talkin' and lookin' at Miss Mayella."

"Then you ran?"

"I sho' did, suh."

"Why did you run?"

"I was scared, suh."

"Why were you scared?"

"Mr. Finch, if you was a nigger like me, you'd be scared, too."

Mr. Link Deas stood up from his seat in the courtroom and announced, "I just want the whole lot of you to know one thing right now. That boy's worked for me eight years an' I ain't had a speck o' trouble outta him. Not a speck."

"Shut your mouth, sir!" Judge Taylor roared. "Link Deas, if you have anything you want to say, you can say it under oath and at the proper time, but until then you get out of this room, you hear me? Get out of this room, sir, you hear me? I'll be damned if I'll listen to this case again!"

Judge Taylor told the reporter to take out what Link had said and told the jury to disregard the interruption.

It was now Mr. Gilmer's turn to ask Tom questions.

"You were given thirty days once for disorderly conduct, Robinson?" asked Mr. Gilmer.

"Yes, suh."

"What'd the nigger look like when you got through with him?"

"He beat me, Mr. Gilmer."

"Yes, but you were convicted, weren't you?"

Atticus spoke up and sounded tired. "It was a misdemeanor and it's in the record, Judge."

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"Witness'll answer, though" said Judge Taylor just as wearily.

"Yes, suh, I got thirty days."

Mr. Gilmer was letting the jury know that a man who was convicted of disorderly conduct could easily have taken advantage of Mayella Ewell.

"Robinson, you're pretty good at busting up chiffarobes and kindling with one hand, aren't you?"

"Yes suh, I reckon so."

"Strong enough to coke the breath out of a woman and sling her to the floor?"

"I never done that, suh."

"But you are strong enough to?"

"I reckon so, suh."

"Had your eye on her a long time, hadn't you, boy?"

"No suh, I never looked at her."

"Then you were mighty polite to do all that chopping and hauling for her, weren't you, boy?"

"I was just tryin' to help her out, suh."

"That was mighty generous of you, you had chores at home after your regular work, didn't you?"

"Yes, suh."

"Why didn't you do them instead of Miss Ewell's?"

"I done 'em both suh."

"You must have been pretty busy. Why?"

"Why what, suh?"

"Why were you so anxious to do that woman's chores?"

"Looked like she didn't have nobody to help her, like I says—"

"With Mr. Ewell and seven children on the place, boy?"

"Well, I says it looked like they never help her none—"

"You did all this chopping and work from sheer goodness, boy?"

"Tried to help her, I says."

Mr. Gilmer smiled grimly at the jury. "Youre a mighty good fellos, it seems – did all this for not one penny?"

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"Yes, suh. I felt right sorry for her, she seemed to try more'n the rest of 'em—"

"You felt sorry for her? You felt sorry for her??" Mr. Gilmer asked, shocked.

Tom realized his mistake but the damage was done. Mr. Gilmer paused awhile and let what was said sink in.

"Now you went by the house as usual, last November twenty-first," he said, "and she asked you to come in and bust up a chiffarobe, is that right?"

"No, suh, it ain't."

"Then you say she's lying, boy?"

Atticus was on his feet to say something but Tom didn't need him and said, "I don't say she's lyin', Mr. Gilmer, I say she's mistaken in her mind."

"Didn't Mr. Ewell run you off the place, boy?"

"No suh, I don't' think he did."

"Don't think… what do you mean?"

"I mean I didn't stay long enough for him to run me off."

"You're very candid about this, why did you run so fast?"

"I says I was scared, suh."

"If you had a clear conscience, why were you scared?"

"Like I says before, it weren't safe for any nigger to be in a – fix like that."

"But you weren't in a fix – you testified that you were resisting Miss Ewell. Were you so scared that she'd hurt you, you ran, a big buck like you?"

"No suh, scared to be in court, just like I am now."

"Scared of arrest, scared you'd have to face up to what you did?"

"No suh, scared I'd hafta face up to what I didn't do."

"Are you being impudent to me, boy?"

"No suh, I didn't go to be."

I didn't hear anymore because I had to take Dill out of the courtroom. He had started to cry and couldn't stop. Jem said if I didn't go with him he'd make me. Reverend Sykes said I ought to take him out too.

"Ain't you feeling good?" I asked.

Dill tried to pull himself together. Mr. Link Deas was on the top step of the courthouse.

"Anything happenin', Scout?" he asked as we went by.

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"No sir," I answered. "Dill here, he's sick."

We went to sit under the shade of the tree. Dill said, "It was just him I couldn't stand."

"Who? Tom?"

"That old Mr. Gilmer doin' him thataway, talking so hateful to him—"

"Dill, that's his job. Why, if we didn't have prosecutors—well, we couldn't have defense attorneys, I reckon."

"I know all that, Scout. It was the way he said it made me sick, plain sick."

"He's suppose to act that way, Dill, he was cross –"

"He didn't act that way when –"

"Dill, those were his own witnesses."

"Well, Mr. Finch didn't act that way to Mayella and old man Ewell when he cross-examined them. The way that man called him 'boy' all the time an' sneered at him, an' looked around at the jury every time he answered –"

"Well, Dill, after all he's just a Negro."

"I don't care one speck. It ain't right, somehow it ain't right to do 'em that way. Hasn't anybody got any business talkin' like that – it just makes me sick."

"That's just Mr. Gilmer's way, Dill, he does 'em all that way. You've never seen him get good'n down on one yet. Why, when – well, today Mr. Gilmer seemed to me like he wasn't half trying. They do 'em all that way, most lawyers, I mean."

"Mr. Finch doesn't."

"He's not an example, Dill, he's… he's the same in the courtroom as he is on the public streets."

"That's not what I mean," said Dill.

"I know what you mean, boy," said a voice behind us. It was Mr. Dolphus Raymond. He peered around the trunk of the tree at us.

"You aren't think-hided, it just makes you sick, doesn't it?"

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Chapter 20

Mr. Dolphus Raymond, the man who lives with a black woman and has mixed children, offered Dill a sip of his drink to settle his stomach. I said, "Dill, you watch out, now," because I knew Mr. Raymond drank alcohol out of that bottle in the brown paper bag.

Dill let go of the straw and said, "Scout, it's nothing but Coca-Cola!"

Mr. Raymond leaned up against the tree-trunk. "You little folks won't tell on me now, will you? It'd ruin my reputation if you did."

"You mean all you drink in that sack's Co-Cola? Just plain Co-Cola?"

"Yes, ma'am," Mr. Raymond nodded. I liked his smell: it was of leather, horses, and cottonseed. He wore the only English riding boots I had ever seen. "That's all I drink, most of the time."

"Then you just pretend to be drunk? Why?"

"Well," Mr. Raymond said, "Some folks don't like that I lie with a black woman since I'm white. So even though I don't care what they think, I try to give 'em a reason. It helps folks if they can latch onto a reason. When I come to town, which is seldom, if I weave a little and drink out of this sack, folks can say Dolphus Raymond is drunk on whiskey – and that's why he won't change his ways. He can't help himself, that's why he lives the way he does."

I told Mr. Raymond, "That ain't honest, making yourself out badder than you already –"

"It ain't honest but it's mighty helpful to folks. Secretly, Scout, I'm not much of a drinker, but you see **they could never, ever understand that I live like I do because that's the way I want to live."**

Mr. Raymond also said, "Dill was crying and feeling sick about the racism he saw in that courtroom. But when he gets older he won't cry anymore."

Jem, Dill and I went back into the courtroom in time to hear Atticus's closing statement. He was telling the jury… "Gentlemen, I remind you that this is a simple case. If you convict Tom Robinson, you must be sure beyond all reasonable doubt that he is guilty. This case should never have even come to trial. This case is as simple as black and white." I noticed Atticus was sweating.

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"The state has not produced any evidence that Mayella was ever raped. Their two witnesses, Mayella and Bob Ewell, didn't have their stories straight. The defendant is not guilty, but somebody in this courtroom is. I have pity for Mayella, but she has accused an innocent man to get rid of her own guilt. She feels guilt because she liked a black man and tried to kiss him. Our society does not allow this. Now she seeks to destroy him so that she doesn't have to face her own guilt. She must destroy the evidence of her offense. Tom did not rape Mayella. All he did was try to get away when she kissed him. Don't let your prejudices get the better of you and make you think he's guilty just because he's black."

As Atticus finished his speech we saw Calpurnia making her way up the middle aisle of the courtroom, walking straight toward Atticus.

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Chapter 21

Calpurnia stopped shyly at the railing and waited for Judge Taylor's attention.

He saw her and said, "It's Calpurnia, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir," she said. "Could I just pass this note to Mr. Finch, please sir? It hasn't got anything to do with – with the trial."

Atticus read the note and it was from Aunt Alexandra. It said that his children were missing.

Mr. Underwood spoke up and said, "I know where they are, Atticus. They're right up yonder in the colored balcony – been there since precisely one-eighteen p.m."

Our father said, "Jem, come down from there." We made our way down the balcony. Atticus and Calpurnia met us at the bottom.

Jem was jumping with excitement. "We've won, haven't we?"

"I've no idea," said Atticus shortly. "You've been here all afternoon? Go home with Calplurnia and get your supper – and stay home."

"Aw, Atticus, let us come back," pleaded Jem. "Please let us hear the verdict, please sir."

"The jury might be out and back in a minute, we don't know. Well, you've heard it all, so you might as well hear the rest. Tell you what, you all can come back when you've eaten your supper – eat slowly, now, you won't miss anything important – and if the jury's still out, you can wait with us. But I expect it'll be over before you get back."

"You think they'll acquit him that fast?" asked Jem.

Atticus opened his mouth to say something and closed it again.

Calpurnia marched us home and was very angry with us. She was upset that we were missing and that we were at the trial listening to all that was going on. She didn't think it was fitting for children to hear.

"Mister Jem, I thought you was getting' some kinda head on your shoulders – the very idea– she's your little sister! The very idea, sir! You oughta be perfectly ashamed of yourself – ain't you got any sense at all"

Jem was chuckling, "Don't you want to hear about it, Cal?"

"Hush your mouth, sir! When you oughta be hangin' your head in shame you go along laughin' –" Calpurnia scolded.

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Jem was still grinning. Calpurnia agreed that we could have Dill over for supper.
Aunt Alexandra met us and almost fainted when Calpurnia told her where we were.
Reverend Sykes had saved our places. We were surprised to see that we had been gone an hour.

"Nobody's moved hardly," said Jem.

The jury had been out for about thirty minutes.

Jem smiled, "Don't fret, we've won it," he said wisely. "Don't see how any jury could convict on what we heard –"

"Now don't you be so confident, Mr. Jem," warned the Reverend. "I ain't never seen any jury decide in favor of a colored man over a white man…"

Jem spoke for awhile on his ideas on the law regarding rape. Time had passed and it was getting close to eight. Atticus was walking around the jury box area and Mr. Gilmer was standing at the windows talking to Mr. Underwood. The courtroom was so still.

I was past tired. When the clock had bonged eleven times, I allowed myself a short nap. I jerked awake and made an effort to remain so. I looked around and saw the people sitting below. Dill was sound asleep, his head on Jem's shoulder and Jem was quiet. The courtoom reminded me of the day when Atticus shot the rabid dog.

Mr. Heck Tate came in and said," This court will come to order," in a voice that rang with authority. Mr. Heck Tate left the room and returned with Tom Robinson.

What happened after that had a dreamlike quality: in a dream I saw the jury return, moving like underwater swimmers, and Judge Taylor's voice came form far away and was tiny.

A jury never looks at a defendant it has convicted, and when this jury came in, not one of them looked at Tom Robinson. The foreman handed a piece of paper to the judge.

I shut my eyes. Judge Taylor was poling the jury: "Guilty… guilty…guilty…" I peeked at Jem and his hands were white from gripping the balcony rail, and his shoulders jerked as if each "guilty" were a separate stab between them.

Someone was punching me, but I was reluctant to take my eyes from the people below us and from the image of Atticus's lonely walk down the aisle.

"Miss Jean Louise?"

I looked. All around us and in the balcony on the opposite wall, the Negroes were getting to their feet. Reverend Sykes's voice was as distant as Judge Taylor's:

"Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin'."

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Chapter 22

When we left the courthouse, Jem started to cry. His face was streaked with angry tears as we made our way through the cheerful crowd. "It ain't right," he muttered, all the way to the corner of the square where we found Atticus waiting for us. Atticus was standing under the street light looking as though nothing had happened: his vest was buttoned, his collar and tie were neatly in place, his watch-chain glistened, he was his impassive self again.

"It ain't right, Atticus," said Jem.

"No, son, it's not right."

"How could they do it, how could they convict Tom if he didn't do it?"

"I don't know, son, but they did it. They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it – seems that only children weep."

The next morning, Calpurnia showed Atticus that the black community had brought all sorts of food for the Finch family. The kitchen table was loaded with enough food to bury the family: hunks of salt pork, tomatoes, beans, even scuppernongs. Atticus grinned when he found a jar of pickled pigs' knuckles. Calpurnia said, "This was all 'round the back steps when I got here this morning. They – they 'preciate what you did, Mr. Finch. They – they aren't oversteppin' themselves, are they?"

Atticus's eyes filled with tears. He did not speak for a moment. "Tell them I'm very grateful," he said. "Tell them – tell them they must never do this again. Times are too hard.."

Later that day Jem, Dill and I went over to talk to Miss Maudie about everything. She said, "You'd be surprised how many people care about Tom. Judge Taylor cares, for example. Did it ever strike you that Judge Taylor naming Atticus to defend that boy was no accident? That Judge Taylor might have had his reasons for naming him?"

Miss Maudie had a good point. Usually Maxwell Green is the lawyer to do these kinds of trials. But he's not very good. So Judge Taylor must have appointed Atticus because he wanted Tom to have a good defense and a fair trial.

When we got home, Aunt Alexandra came to the door and called us, but she was too late. It was Miss Stephanie's pleasure to tell us: this morning, Mr. Bob Ewell stopped Atticus on the post office corner, spat in his face, and told him he'd get him if it took the rest of this life.

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Chapter 23

"I wish Bob Ewell wouldn't chew tobacco," was all Atticus said about it.

According to Miss Stephanie Crawford, however, Atticus was leaving the post office when Mr. Ewell approached him, cursed him, spat on him, and threatened to kill him. Miss Stephanie said Atticus didn't bat an eye, just took out his handkerchief and wiped his face and stood there and let Mr. Ewell call him names wild horses could not bring her to repeat. So Mr. Ewell said, "Too proud to fight, you n****r-lovin' bastard?" And Atticus replied, "No, too old," put his hands in his pockets and strolled on.

A few days later, Atticus noticed that Jem and I were really worried because Bob Ewell had threatened to kill Atticus. He told Jem, "Jem, see if you can stand in Bob Ewell's shoes a minute. I destroyed his last shred of credibility at that trial, if he had any to begin with. The man had to have some kind of comeback, his kind always does. So if spitting in my face and threatening me saved Mayella Ewell one extra beating, that's something I'll gladly take. He had to take it out on somebody and I'd rather it be me than that houseful of children out there. You understand?"

After that, we were not afraid. Atticus also told us that nothing would happen to Tom Robinson until the higher court reviewed his case, and that Tom had a good chance of going free, or at least of having a new trial. He was at Enfield Prison Farm, seventy miles away in Chester County. I asked Atticus if Tom's wife and children were allowed to visit him, but Atticus said no. "If he loses his appeal," I asked one evening, "what'll happen to him?"

"He'll go to the electric chair," said Atticus, "unless the Governor commutes his sentence. Not time to worry yet, Scout. We've got a good chance."

"Tom's jury sure made up its mind in a hurry," Jem muttered.

Atticus's fingers went to his watchpocket. "No it didn't," he said, more to himself than to us. "That was the one thing that made me think, well, this may be the shadow of a beginning. That jury took a few hours. An inevitable verdict, maybe, but usually it takes 'em just a few minutes. You might like to know that there was one fellow who took considerable wearing down – in the beginning he was wanting to set Tom free."

"Who?" Jem was astonished.

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Atticus's eyes twinkled. "It's not for me to say, but I'll tell you this much. He was one of your Old Sarum friends…"

"One of the Cunninghams?" Jem yelped. "One of – I didnt' recognize any of 'em… you're jokin'."

"One of their connections. On a hunch, I didn't dismiss him from the jury even though I could have."

"Golly Moses," Jem said reverently. "One minute they're tryin' to kill Tom and the next they're tryin' to turn him loose… I'll never understand those folks as long as I live."

After Atticus left the room, I decided that I would be nice to Water Cunningham from now on since his someone in his family had been on the jury and wanted to set Tom free. I even said that I would invite him over to spend the night some time.

"We'll see about that," Aunt Alexandra said.

Surprised, I turned to her. "Why not, Aunty? They're good folks."

She looked at me over her sewing glasses. "Jean Louise, there is no doubt in my mind that they're good folks. But they're not our kind of folks. You can scrub Walter Cunningham till he shines, you can put him in shoes and a new suit, but he'll never be like Jem. Besides, there's a drinking streak in that family a mile wide. Finch women aren't interested in that sort of people."

"If they're good folks, then why can't I be nice to Walter?"

"I didn't say not to be nice to him. You should be friendly and polite to him, you should be gracious to everybody, dear. But you don't have to invite him home."

"But I want to play with Walter, Aunty, why can't I?"

She took off her glasses and stared at me. "I'll tell you why," she said. "Because – he—is—trash, that's why you can't play with him. I'll not have you around him, picking up his habits and learning Lord-knows-what. You're enough of a problem to your father as it is."

I was so angry and upset, but Jem put his arm around me and led me, sobbing in fury, to his room. He told me that Aunty was trying to make me into a lady and told me I should take up sewing or something.

I told Jem that I was so upset that Aunty called Walter Cunningham trash. "But Walter isn't trash. He ain't like the Ewells," I told Jem.

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"You know something, Scout? I've got it all figured out, now. I've thought about it a lot lately and I've got it figured out. There's four kinds of folks in the world. There's the ordinary kind like us and the neighbors, there's the kind like the Cunninghams out in the woods, the kind like the Ewells down at the dump, and the Negroes. Our kind of folks don't like the Cunninghams, the Cunninghams don't like the Ewells, and the Ewells hate and despise the colored folks. Background means that a family has been reading and writing for a long time."

"I don't' think that's what background is, Jem. Everybody's gotta learn, nobody's born knowin'. That Walter's as smart as he can be, he just gets held back sometimes because he has to stay out and help his daddy. Nothin's wrong with him. Naw, Jem, I think there's just one kind of folks. Folks."

Jem said, "That's what I thought too, when I was your age. If there's just one kind of folks, why can't they get along with each other? If they're all alike, why do they go out of their way to despise each other? Scout, I think I'm beginning to understand something. I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in the house all this time… it's because he *wants* to stay inside.

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Chapter 24

It was on the brink of September and Dill would be leaving tomorrow. He was off with Jem swimming. They said they were going in naked and I couldn't come, so I divided my time between Calpurnia and Miss Maudie.

Today Aunt Alexandra was having the ladies over. After they talked, they were going to have refreshments. Aunt Alexandra told me to join them for refreshments. I didn't know if I should go into the dining room or stay out. I was wearing my pink Sunday dress, shoes and a petticoat. Since Aunty let Calpurnia serve them today, I thought if I spilled something on my dress Calpurnia would have to wash it out before tomorrow. I didn't want to give her anymore work today.

"Can I help you, Cal?" I asked, wishing to be of some service.

"You be still as a mouse in that corner," she said, "an' you can help me load up the trays when I come back."

I helped Calplurnia carry in the coffee pot and did not spill a thing. Aunt Alexandra smiled brilliantly. "Stay with us, Jean Louise," she said. This was all her campaign to teach me to be a lady. I sat next to Miss Maudie. I tightly gripped the sides of the chair and waited for someone to speak to me.

"You're mighty dressed up, Miss Jean Louise," Miss Maudie said, "Where are your britches today?"

"Under my dress."

I hadn't meant it to be funny, but the ladies laughed. My cheeks grew hot as I realized my mistake, but Miss Maudie looked gravely down at me. She never laughed at me unless I meant it to be funny.

Miss Stephanie Crawford called from across the room, "Whatcha going to be when you grow up, Jean Louise? A lawyer?"

I said no. But I hadn't really thought about it.

I asked Mrs. Merriweather who was sitting to my right about what they had been talking about before I came in. She filled me in on how she had been out to visit a family who was living in sin and squalor. She told me how fortunate I was to live in a good Christian family with Christian folks in a Christian town.

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The conversation then turned toward Tom Robinson's wife. Mrs. Merriweather continued, "there's one thing I truly believe, Gertrude," she continued, "but some people just don't see it my way. If we just let then know we forgive 'em, that we've forgotten it, then this whole thing'll blow over."

"Ah – Mrs. Merriweather," I interrupted once more, "what'll blow over?"

"Nothing, Jean Louise," she said, "the cooks and field hands are just dissatisfied, but they're settling down now – they grumbled all next day after that trial." She paused and turned to another woman in the group, "Gertrude, I tell you there's nothing more distracting than a sulky darky. Their mouths go down to here. Just ruins your day to have one of 'em in the kitchen."

Another lady said, "Looks like we're fightin' a losing battle, a losing battle… it doesn't matter to 'em one bit. We can educate 'em till we're blue in the face, we can try till we drop to make Christians out of 'em, but there's no lady safe in her bed these nights."

I had lost interest in the conversation when they quit talking about Tom Robinson's wife.

Mrs. Merriweather spoke up again. "Northerners are hypocrites… at least we don't have that sin on our shoulders down here. People up there set 'em free, but you don't see 'em settin' at the table with 'em. At least we don't have the deceit to say to 'em yes, you're as good as we are but stay away from us. Down here we just say you live your way and we'll live ours. I think that woman, that Mrs. Roosevelt's lost her mind – just plain lost her mind coming down to Birmingham and tryin' to sit with 'em. If I was the Mayor of Birmingham I'd –"

I was thinking if I was the Governor of Alabama I'd let Tom Robinson go so quick. I heard Calpurnia talking about how bad it was going for Tom. He said that there wasn't a thingt Atticus could do to make being shut up easier for him. The last thing he had said to Atticus the day before he was taken to the prison camp was, "Good-bye, Mr. Finch, there ain't nothin' you can do now, so there ain't no use tryin'." He had just given up hope.

Atticus came in the door and his face was white. He apologized for the interruption and asked if he could speak with Alexandra. He wanted to borrow Calpurnia for a while.

"Cal," Atticus said, "I want you to go with me out to Helen Robinson's house—"

"What's the matter?" Aunt Alexandra said, alarmed by the look on my father's face.

"Tom's dead."

Aunt Alexandra put her hand to her mouth.

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"They shot him" said Atticus. "He was running. It was during their exercise period. They said he just broke into a blind raving charge at the fence and started climbing over. Right in front of them—"

"Didn't they try to stop him? Didn't they give him any warning?" Aunt Alexandtra's voice shook.

"Oh, yes, the guards called to him to stop. They fired a few shots in the air, then to kill. They got him just as he went over the fence. They said if he's had two good arms he'd have made it, he was moving that fast. Seventeen bullet holes in him. They didn't have to shoot him that much. Cal I want you to come out with me and help me tell Helen."

"Yes sir," she murmured, fumbling with her apron. Miss Maudie went to Calpurnia and untied it.

"This is the last straw, Atticus," Aunt Alexandra said.

"Depends on how you look at it," he said. "What was one Negro, more or less, among two hundred of 'em? He wasn't Tom to them, he was an escaping prisoner. We had a good chance," he said. " I told him what I thought, but I couldn't in truth say that we had more than a good chance. I guess Tom was tired of white men's chances and preferred to take his own. Ready, Cal?"

"Yessir, Mr. Finch."

"Then let's go."

Aunt Alexandra sat down in the chair and put her hands to her face. I thought she was crying. When she took her hands away she wasn't but she looked weary. I heard Miss Maudie breathing heavily and heard the ladies in the other room chatting happily.

"I can't say I approve of everything he does, Maudie, but he's my brother, and I just want him to know when this will ever end. It tears him to pieces. He doesn't show it much, but it tears him to pieces. I've seen him when – what else do they want from him, Maudie, what else?"

"What does who want, Alexandra?" Miss Maudie asked.

"I mean this town. They're perfectly willing to let him wreck his health doing what they're afraid to do, they're –"

"Be quiet, they'll hear you," said Miss Maudie. "Have you ever thought of it this way, Alexandra? Whether Maycomb knows it or not, we're paying the highest tribute we can pay a man. We trust him to do right. It's that simple."

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"Who?"

"**The handful of people in this town who say that fair play is not marked White Only; the handful of people who say a fair trial is for everybody, not just us; the handful of people with enough humility to think when they look at a Negro, there but for the Lord's kindness am I… The handful of people in this town with background, that's who they are."**

I was shaking and Miss Maudie told me to stop and she also told Aunt Alexandra to get up because we had left the ladies too long already.

"Are you together again, Jean Louise?" Miss Maudie asked.

"Yes ma'am."

"Then let's join the ladies."

We all went in and Aunt Alexandra refilled coffee cups and dished out goodies. The conversation resumed with the Christian works they had done.

Aunt Alexandra looked across the room at me and smiled. She looked at a tray of cookies on the table and nodded at them. I carefully picked up the tray and watched myself walk to Mrs. Merriweather. With my best company manners, I asked her if she would have some.

After all, if Aunty could be a lady at a time like this, so could I.

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Chapter 25

September had come, but not a trace of cool weather with it, and we were still sleeping on the back screen porch. A roly poly insect had crawled onto the porch. Jem was scowling when I went to mash it. This was probably a part of the stage he was going through, and I wished he would hurry up and get through it.

"Why couldn't' I mash him?" I asked.

"Because they don't bother you," Jem answered in the darkness.

"Reckon you're at the stage now where you don't kill flies and mosquitoes now, I reckon," I said. "Lemme know when you change your mind. Tell you one thing though, I ain't gonna sit around and not scratch a redbug."

"Aw, dry up," he answered drowsily.

Jem was the one who was getting more like a girl every day, not I. I was thinking of Dill. He had left us the first of the month saying that he would be back the minute school was out. Dill told me of the time he and Jem were swimming and on their way back, they saw Atticus driving up the road. He stopped and Jem pleaded for a ride. Atticus finally agreed. He and Calpurnia were on their way to Tom Robinson's place.

They turned off the highway, rode slowly by the dump and past the Ewell residence, down the narrow lane to the Negro cabins. Dill said a crowd of black children were playing marbles in Tom's front yard. Atticus parked the car and got out. Calpurnia followed him through the front gate.

Dill heard him ask one of the children, "Where's your mother, Sam?" and heard Sam say, "She down at Sis Steven's, Mr. Finch. Want me run fetch her?"

Dill said Atticus looked uncertain, then he said yes, and Sam scampered off. "Go on with your game, boys," Atticus said to the children.

A little girl came to the door and she needed some help getting up the steps. Dill said that Atticus offered her his finger to help her and then gave her over to Calpurnia.

Sam was trotting behind his mother when they came up. Dill said Helen said, "'Evenin', Mr. Finch, won't you have a seat?" But she didn't say anymore. Neither did Atticus.

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"Scout," said Dill, "she just fell down in the dirt. Just fell down in the dirt, like a giant with a big foot just came along and stepped on her. Just ump—" Dill's fat foot hit the ground. "Like you'd step on an ant."

Dill said Calpurnia and Atticus lifted Helen to her feet and half carried, half walked her to the cabin. They stayed inside a long time, and Atticus came out alone. When they drove back by the dump, some of the Ewells hollered at them, but Dill didn't catch what they said.

Maycomb was interested by the news of Tom's death for perhaps two days. To Maycomb, Tom's death was typical. Typical for a n****r to cut and run. Typical of a n****'s mentality to have no plan, no thought for the future, just run blind first chance he saw. Funny thing, Atticus Finch might've got him off scot free, but wait --? Hell no. You know how they are. Easy come, easy go. Just shows you that Robinson was legally married, they say he kept himself clean, went to church and all that, but when it comes down to the line, the n****r always comes out in 'em.

The Maycomb Tribune appeared the following Thursday. There was a brief obituary, but there was also an editorial.

Mr. Underwood was at this most bitter, and he couldn't care less who cancelled advertising and subscriptions as a result of his editorial. He didn't write about the injustices, he was writing so children could understand. **Mr. Underwood simply figured it was a sin to kill cripples, be they standing, sitting, or escaping. He likened Tom's death to the senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children.**

How could this be so, I wondered, as I read Mr. Underwood's editorial. Senseless killing – Tom had been given due process of law to the day of this death; he had been tried openly and convicted by twelve good men and true; my father had fought for him all the way. Then Mr. Underwood's meaning became clear: Atticus had used every tool available to free men to save Tom Robinson, but in the secret courts of men's hearts, Atticus had no case. Tom was a dead man the minute Mayella Ewell opened her mouth and screamed.

The name Ewell gave me a queasy feeling. Mr. Ewell said it made one down and about two more to go. Jem told me not to be afraid, Mr. Ewell was more hot gas than anything. Jem also told me that if I breathed a word to Atticus, if in anyway I let Atticus know I knew, Jem would personally never speak to me again.

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Chapter 26

School started, and so did our daily trips past the Radley Place. Jem was in the seventh grade now and went to high school, beyond the grammar-school building; I was now in the third grade, and our routines were so different I only walked to school with Jem in the mornings and saw him at mealtimes.

The Radley Place didn't terrify me anymore. I sometimes felt a bit of remorse, when passing by the old place, at ever having taken part in what must have been sheer torment to Arthur Radley – what reasonable recluse wants children peeping through his shutters, delivering greetings on the end of a fishing-pole, wandering in his collards at night?

And yet I remembered. Two Indian-head pennies, chewing gum, soap dolls, a rusty medal, a broken watch and chain. Jem must have put them away somewhere. I stopped and looked at the tree one afternoon: the trunk was swelling around its cement patch. The patch itself was turning yellow.

I still looked for Boo each time I went by. Maybe someday we would see him. I imagined how it would be: when it happened, he'd just be sitting in the swing when I came along. "Hidy do, Mr. Arthur," I would say, as if I had said it every afternoon of my life.

"Evening, Jean Louise," he would say, as if he had said it every afternoon of my life, "Right pretty spell we're having, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir, right pretty" I would say, and go on. It was only a fantasy though. We would never see him.

One night when I told Atticus that I wanted to see Boo Radley someday, he said "Don't start with that again, Scout. I'm too old to go chasing you off the Radley property. Besides, it's dangerous. You might get shot. You know, Mr. Nathan shoots at every shadow he sees, even shadows that leave size-four bare footprints. You were lucky not to be killed."

I couldn't believe it! Atticus KNEW it was US that Mr. Radley shot at that night! This was the first time he had let us know that he knew a lot more about something than we thought he knew.

One day in school, Cecil Jacobs presented a current event about Adolf Hitler. He presented the news article to the class. "Adolf Hitler has been after the Jews and he's puttin' 'em

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in prisons and he's taking away all their property and he won't let any of 'em out of the country…"

A student in the back of the room asked, "How can he do that?"

"Who do what?" asked Miss Gates, our teacher, patiently.

"I mean how can Hitler just put a lot of folks in a pen like that, looks like the government'd stop him," said the student.

"Hitler is the government," said Miss Gates. She went to the blackboard and printed the work DEMOCRACY in large letters. "Democracy," she said. "Does anybody have a definition?"

I raised my hand and said, "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none."

"Very good, Jean Louise, very good," Miss Gates smiled. In front of "DEMOCRACY", she printed "WE ARE A". "Now class, say it all together, 'We are a democracy.'"

We said it. Then Miss Gates said, "That's the difference between America and Germany. We are a democracy and Germany is a dictatorship. Over there we don't believe in persecuting anybody. Persecution comes from people who are prejudiced. Prejudice," she said carefully. "There are no better people in the world than the Jews, and why Hitler doesn't think so is a mystery to me."

I went home later that day and asked Atticus if it was okay to hate Hitler.

"It is not," he said. "it's not okay to hate anybody."

I was still confused about things so I went to see Jem. I said, "Jem, coming out of the courthouse that night Miss Gates was – she was goin' down the steps in front of us, you must not of seen her – she was talking with Miss Stephanie Crawford. I heard her say it's time somebody taught 'em a lesson, they were gettin' way above themselves, and the next thing they think they can do is marry us. She was talking about the black folks. Jem , how can she say she hates Hitler so bad and then turn around and be ugly about folks right here at home?"

Jem was suddenly furious. He leaped off the bed, grabbed me by the collar and shook me. "I never wanta hear about that courthouse again, ever, ever, you hear me? You hear me? Don't' you ever say one word to me about it again, you hear? Now go on!"

I was too surprised to cry. I crept from Jem's room and shut the door softly. I found Atticus and tried to climb up in his lap. Atticus smiled. "You're getting so big now, I'll just

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have to hold a part of you." He held me close. "Scout," he said softly, "don't let Jem get you down. He's having a rough time these days. I heard you back there."

Atticus said that Jem was trying hard to forget all the prejudice and injustice he saw at Tom's trial. After enough time passed, Jem would be able to make sense of it all and sort things out, but right now he was very upset.

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Chapter 27

Something weird happened to Judge Taylor one Sunday night. He was lost in a book when he noticed a scratching noise. "Hush," he said to Ann Taylor, his fat dog. Then he realized he was speaking to an empty room; the scratching noise was coming from the rear of the house. Judge Taylor clumped to the back porch to let Ann out and found the screen door swinging open. A shadow on the corner of the house caught his eye, and that was all he saw of the visitor. Mrs. Taylor came home from church to find her husband in his chair, lost in the writing of Bob Taylor, with a shotgun across his lap. I bet that his "visitor" was Bob Ewell who was mad at him because he appointed Atticus to Tom's case, which meant the judge wanted Tom to have a fair chance.

Something happened to Helen Robinson too. Mr. Link Deas, who had been Tom's boss, created a job for Helen because he felt so badly about what happened to Tom. Helen had to walk nearly a mile out of her way to work in order to avoid the Ewell place. The Ewells would swear at her if she tried to use the public road that ran past their house. When Link Deas realized that Helen was coming the long way to work, he asked her why. He got very mad and went to the Ewell house. He yelled out to Bob that he would have him arrested if he kept bothering Helen. But Bob kept annoying her. He would follow behind her saying foul, evil things. Link Deas threatened again to have him arrested and eventually he stopped bothering her.

Halloween was approaching, and this year we were having a pageant. Mrs. Grace Merriweather had composed an original pageant, and I was going to be a ham. She thought I would be adorable if some of the children were costumed to represent the county's agricultural products: Cecil Jacobs would be dressed up to look like a cow; Agnes Boone would make a lovely butterbean, another child would be a peanut, and on down the line. Our only duties, as far as I could gather from our two rehearsals, were to enter from stage left as Mrs. Merriweather identified us. When she called out "PORK", that was my cue.

A few hours before the pageant I practiced my part for Calpurnia in the kitchen and she said I was wonderful. I wanted to go across the street to show Miss Maudie, but Jem said she'd probably be at the pageant anyway.

After that, it didn't matter whether they went or not. Jem said he would take me. Thus began our longest journey together.

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Chapter 28

The weather was warm. The wind was growing stronger and there was no moon. As we walked Jem and I talked about ghosts. We were near the Radley lot. I was getting scared anyway when we someone suddenly leaped out at us. "God almighty!" Jem yelled.

Cecil Jacobs shrieked, "Haa gotcha!" He was mighty proud of himself. And he told us so as we walked the rest of the way to the school.

The auditorium was filling up with people and backstage there were people with all sorts of costumes. I had some time before I had to be onstage so I curled my knees up and sank down in my costume to rest. Well, I fell asleep listening to boring Mrs. Meriweather's long speech about Maycomb's grand history. I woke up suddenly to her shrieking "POOORRRKK!" and toddled as fast as I could on stage. Apparently I was too late because she had already called me a few times. She was mad at me for ruining her pageant. Judge Taylor liked it though, and the audience cheered loudly for me.

I was so embarrassed that I didn't want to leave right away so we waited for most people to leave, then we began walking home. It was even darker out. Em was guiding me along since I still had my ham costume on. At one point he squeezed the top of my costume too hard.

"Ahhhh, Jem—"

"Hush up, Scout."

"Whatcha doin'?"

"Thought I heard something," he whispered. We stopped and listened.

"Ah, it's probably ole Cecil again, trying to scare us."

"It's not that. I hear it when we're walkin' along."

"Are you afraid?" I asked.

"No. Think we're almost to the tree, be real quiet." It was difficult to walk in my costume and we couldn't see anything. I could hear someone shuffling, and someone's pants rustling behind us. Jem was still holding onto me. We stopped again to listen and now someone was running towards us.

"Run Scout! Run!"

Something crushed me in my costume and I fell to the ground. I was on the ground floundering around. I could hear scuffling, kicking sounds, and scraping. Someone rolled

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against me and then Jem pulled me up. We were nearly to the road when I felt Jem jerk backwards. There was more scuffling and then Jem screamed. The scuffling noises were dying but I heard someone wheezing. I head someone moving so I asked, "Jem?" It seemed like someone else was under the tree now. I felt around and someone was lying there. I began walking toward the road and I could see a man walking towards my house, carrying Jem.

"Call Dr. Reynolds," Atticus said sharply. "Where's Scout?"

"Here she is," Aunt Alexandra called, pulling me towards her, working me free of my mangled costume. Then Atticus called the sheriff, Heck Tate.

"Is Jem dead?" I asked Aunt Alexandra.

"No – no darling, he's unconscious. What happened?"

"I don't know." She left it at that and brought me some overalls to put on.

When Dr. Reynolds arrived it took him ten forevers to finish checking on Jem, and then I asked him, "Is Jem dead?"

"Far from it." He talked while looking me over to make sure I was okay. "He's got a bump on the head just like yours and a broken arm. Looks like someone tried to wring his arm off. We can't do much tonight except try to make him comfortable. You don't feel broke anywhere, do you?" I smiled. "Go have a look at him." By then Mr. Tate was there so we all went in together.

Jem was lying on his back. There was an ugly mark along one side of his face. His left arm lay out form his body.

"Jem…?"

Atticus said, "Let's not bother him, he needs his rest." I retreated from his bed. Aunt Alexandra was in the rocking chair. Mr. Tate stood in the doorway. The man who brought Jem in was in the corner.

"Heck, did you find anything out there?" Atticus asked.

"Sit down, Mr. Finch, he said pleasantly. "I found Scout's dress, some funny pieces of muddy cloth." He paused. "And I found Bob Ewell on the ground – he's dead, Mr. Finch."

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Chapter 29

Aunt Alexandra stood right up and gasped.

"Are you sure?" Atticus said weakly.

"He won't hurt these children again," Mr. Tate said.

He turned to me. "Scout, can you tell us what happened out there? Did you see him following you?"

"We started home. It was dark. Jem said, 'Hush a minute.' We thought it was Cecil Jacobs; he scared us once tonight. I could hear the footsteps too, then. They walked when we walked and stopped when we stopped. When we got under the tree, all of a sudden something' grabbed me an' mashed my costume. I heard them tusslin'. Jem grabbed me and pulled me toward the road. Some – Mr. Ewell yanked him down. There there was a noise – Jem hollered. Mr. Ewell was trying to squeeze me to death, I reckon… then somebody yanked Mr. Ewell down. Jem must have got up. Somebody was staggerin' around and coughin'. I thought it was Jem but it was him." I half pointed to the man in the corner.

His arms were folded across his chest. He had sickly white hands that had never seen the sun. He face was white too; his cheeks were thin. His gray eyes were so colorless I thought he was blind. I gazed at him in wonder and his lips parted into a timid smile. Our neighbor's image blurred with my sudden tears.

"Hey, Boo," I said.

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Chapter 30

"Mr. Arthur, honey," Atticus corrected me. He then suggested that we go out on the porch. I led Boo to a chair.

Atticus rubbed his head and said, "Well Heck, it was a clear cut self-defense, Jem is almost thirteen but it will go to trial in county court."

"Mr. Finch – Jem didn't stab Bob Ewell," said Heck Tate. "Bob Ewell fell on his knife. He killed himself." Atticus looked like he didn't believe Mr. Tate. Mr. Tate kept glancing at Boo. They went back and forth a few times, and they seemed to disagree. Mr. Tate told Atticus that if he told the town exactly what happened tonight the whole town would talk about it, and all the women would want to bring Boo cakes for helping Jem and me. "To take the one man who's done you and this town a service and draggin' him with his shy ways into the limelight is a sin."

Mr. Tate stomped off the porch, and Atticus slowly turned to me.

"Scout, Mr. Ewell fell on his knife. Can you possibly understand?"

I hugged him and said, "Yes,sir. Mr. Tate was right, it'd be sort of like shootin' a mockingbird."

Atticus rubbed my head and then walked across the porch to Boo. "Thank you for my children, Arthur."

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Chapter 31

Boo Radley shuffled to his feet. He made uncertain moves. I took him to see Jem one last time. He leaned forward and an expression of curiousity was on his face, as though he had never seen a boy before. His hand came down lightly on Jem's hair.

"Will you take me home?" he whispered. I took his arm so that it looked like he was escorting me like a lady down the walk. When we got to his door, he gently released my hand, opened the door, and went inside. I never saw him again.

I turned around on his front porch and looked at the neighborhood from Boo's view. I thought about all of the things he might have seen: Dill, Jem, and I getting scolded for playing near his yard: the night of the fire: Atticus shooting the dog. He had been with us through all of it. **Atticus said you never really knew a man until you stand in his shoes. He was right.**

As I walked home I thought about all that Jem and I had learned. There wasn't much left, except maybe algebra.

Atticus was sitting up reading in Jem's room. I asked if I could sit with him and he agreed. He was reading a book, so I asked him to read it aloud. I was falling asleep so he took me to my room. I told him the story was good, but the man in the story was misunderstood. People thought he was bad. But when they finally saw him **"he hadn't done anything… he was real nice."**

"**Most people are Scout, when you finally see them."**

He tucked the covers under my chin, turned out the light , and went into Jem's room.

He would be there all night, and when Jem woke up in the morning.

The End

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